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The religious, secular and spiritual climate of higher education: Exploring Penn State's Pasquerilla Center through case study

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**The religious, secular and spiritual climate of higher education: Exploring Penn State's
Pasquerilla Center through case study**

by

J. Cody Nielsen

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Education (Educational Leadership)

Program of Study Committee:
Erin Doran, Co-major Professor
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The student author, whose presentation of the scholarship herein was approved by the program of study committee, is solely responsible for the content of this dissertation. The Graduate College will ensure this dissertation is globally accessible and will not permit alterations after a degree is conferred.

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2019

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DEDICATION

For Levi...

May have forgive me for all the time away from him.

I'll always love you more than anything else.

For my family of friends...

I could never have done it without all of you. Thank you for the love, all the guest beds to sleep on, the meals we shared, the tears you've allowed me to share. I will forever be grateful for all that each of you have offered me.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation study explored the campus climate of Penn State University for religious, secular, and spiritual identities through use of Strange and Banning's Educating by Design theoretical framework. Specifically, it employed use of case study methodology to qualitatively examine how the Pasquerilla Center, the largest Multifaith Center in North America, as well as the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development, engaged in providing institutional policies and practices that supported all forms of religious and non-religious identities. The study considered how constructivism affected perceptions of campus climate by students from Muslim, Jewish, Catholic Christian, and Protestant and Evangelical Christian religious identification. Four dimensions of campus climate-- physical environments, aggregated environments, constructed environments, and organizational environments provided the guiding framework from which the study was analyzed.

The study revealed that while physical environments were effective in supporting certain identities, namely Muslim and Jewish students, other students found their campus experience to be less welcoming. Additionally, the presence of a physical environment, such as a multifaith center, may pacify the rest of the general campus from taking responsibility for supporting religious, secular, and spiritual identities. The study also revealed a general "interaction without intersection" of individuals across religious communities until the introduction of a campus staff/administrator, and office and a specific focus was placed upon such intersections. The study offered several considerations regarding future research and policy and practice implication, including the need for more prayer and meditation spaces, kosher and halal dietary options, and in general more inclusive institutional policies related to religious holiday observances

CHAPTER 1. THE ROLE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Public universities encompass nearly 40 percent of the total 4,726 colleges and universities in the United States (American Council of Education, 2014 National Center for Education Studies [NCES], 2014) but serve approximately 73 percent of the total 20-million-member student population (2015). Both 2-year and the traditional 4-year universities are rich with individuals of multiple identities, including religious, secular, and spiritual identities. Religious, secular, and spiritual diversity is becoming more important for higher education to consider as the composition of U.S. society shifts in religious categories (Pew Research Center [PRC], 2015).

From 2007-2014, Christian affiliation has dropped to just over 70 percent of the U.S. population, while non-religious identities, coined as “nones” by Pew’s Research Center has climbed steadily in response (PRC, 2015), a significant change in a short amount of time. Additionally, the number of Americans who identify as Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and Buddhist are growing and each group now individually represents around one percent of the U.S. population (PRC, 2015). With nearly 75 percent of undergraduate college students attending public universities, it is no longer only private and historically Christian, religious affiliated institutions who should consider how to support non-Christian identities (PRC, 2015). Support methods may include opportunities for multifaith and prayer spaces, accommodating religious holidays as part of the academic calendar, making dietary options available in dining centers across campus, and others. This support also can include the creation of administrative offices and physical spaces which support religious, secular, and spiritual identifying members of the community. All of these methods can be understood through the lens of campus climate.

A Campus Climate Through the Lens of Policy and Practice

Much has been done to support the campus climate in relationship to the student experience (Bryant Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2013). The work of the Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC), an organization which focuses on helping students grow in their understanding of each other's religious and spiritual identities, highlights that today's college students hold a greater appreciative value toward peers of differing religious beliefs than in previous generations (Bryant Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman, 2015). Despite these student attitudes, responses from student affairs administrators, including Vice Presidents for Student Affairs, to implement policies and practices supporting the comprehensive student experience has fallen sharply behind (Park, 2014). This may in part be due to the belief that students practice their spirituality individually and that religious identity formation during college does not affect some of the principal outcomes most administrators are concerned with, including retention, graduation rates and student satisfaction (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012).

Studying these campus climates through the lens of policies and practices, as well as through the understanding of physical spaces for use by religious, secular, and spiritual identities is almost entirely missing from in the literature. Currently only two such studies (Park, 2014; Edwards, 2015) specifically consider these offices and physical spaces in religious, secular, and spiritual identity studies. Instead, most studies previously have focused on the individual student experience as a way to analyze how religious, secular, and spiritual identities are supported on campus (see Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011, Bryant Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2013). Studying the physical spaces and the institutional offices will add to the literature and will provide the opportunity for practitioners to consider how specific policies and practices can shift support for

religious, secular, and spiritual identities for all students on a campus rather than for only a few. This study seeks to use the above-mentioned studies by Park (2014) and Edwards (2015) as a way to expand upon the current literature. While small in sample size, one can consider these few studies and their methods as a benchmark by which to consider the current research.

The campus climate for religious, secular, and spiritual identities is often cultivated through offices which are tasked to create and uphold institutional policies protective of such identities. Traditionally, these offices are chaplaincies, units which are almost exclusively on private campuses. Places like Stanford University, Duke University, Harvard, Yale, Grinnell College, Williams College, and Berea College are examples of some of the most well-respected of these offices among chaplaincy circles due to both their leadership and their history of expanding the institutional policies and practices which support the religious, secular, and spiritual identities of students on those campuses (Forster-Smith, 2014). While many studies have considered these and other private university efforts to support religious, secular, and spiritual identities (Astin, Astin & Lindholm, 2011; IDEALS, 2016-2018), few studies have considered the growing number of public university administrative offices and physical spaces, or what are commonly known as multifaith centers and their support for religious, secular, and spiritual identities (Park, 2014; Edwards, 2015). This study responded to this lack of literature, as well as added an important element of research design missing from the field by considering how policies and practices themselves are viewed by students as an aspect of their sense of welcome on campus.

Public universities can be an effective place to experiment with religious, secular, and spiritual identity efforts due to their growing religious diversity and institutional goals of equity

and inclusion. Durant (2017) finds that if faculty and student affairs professionals are equipped and ready to manage conversations related to religious, secular, and spiritual needs and sensitivities, students are more likely to report feelings of belonging as it relates to their religious practices. Additionally, fostering changes in cultural standards from avoidance of religious, secular, and spiritual identities to practices of curiosity, wherein individuals are open to learning about one another across religious identities, increases the receptivity to engage religious and spiritual identities (Small, 2015).

The challenge of this work lies in the level of responsibility administrators appear to support. In *Making Meaning: Embracing Spirituality, Faith, Religion, and Life Purpose in Student Affairs* (Small & Bowman, 2017), the author addressed this topic directly and succinctly. Although our profession has done a great deal to meet the spiritual, religious, and life purpose needs of students, there is a long way to go to make this work a more permanent and central part of student affairs. We believe that we should stop using the public institution defense as an excuse for not doing work related to spirituality, faith, religion, and life purpose (as well as) create new institutional structures that provide a permanent home for doing work related to purpose and meaning. (Small, 2017, pp. 136-137).

Small illustrates the challenge of what often occurs within a segment of higher education which includes nearly three quarters of all students (PRC, 2014). And yet, there are changes afoot. In higher education, we find a growing trend for public institutions to create university administrative units focused on spiritual and religious identity. While data is inconclusive on exactly how many institutions have created centers and positions or offices in recent times, data from Jacobsen and Jacobsen (2012) shows growth in the number of co-curricular positions, including full time positions, as well as the number of deliberate physical spaces and centers at

many public institutions. These include the University of Toledo, the University of Maryland, Wichita State University, Portland State University, the University of Vermont, and Ohio State University, among others (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). The most comprehensive in terms of amount of physical space and the number of staff within an office is that of Pennsylvania (Penn) State University (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). Penn State's 60,000 square foot Pasquerilla Multifaith Center, opened in 2003, stands as the largest multifaith center in North America. Penn State's Office for Spiritual and Ethical Development, which oversees institutional policies and practices as well as the overall use of the Pasquerilla center, was created first as an Office of Religious Life in the 1960s and now falls under the auspices of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Due to its over 15 years of established policies and practices and the sheer size of its multifaith center, Penn State offered an excellent model to consider for research. The focus of this study pertains to this university.

As an act of recognition of the unique and transformative contribution made by Penn State, this study focused on understanding the Pasquerilla Multifaith Center in State College, Pennsylvania. Unlike Jacobsen and Jacobsen's (2012) research analyzing the ways in which religious communities directly affect campus experiences of students, the current study sought to assess the campus climate of the institution using a theoretical framework from Strange and Banning (2001). Their framework, which focuses on organizational environments, aggregate environments, physical environments, and constructed environments (Strange & Banning, 2001), was used in part to support this study through use of a bounded case study design. The study qualitatively considered the Pasquerilla Center for Spirituality and Ethics, the 60,000 square foot building where religious, secular, and spiritual identities are supported on campus.

Choosing Penn State as the site for study was an ideal option due to its significant institutional policies and practices as its status as a well-respected public institution for higher education in the U.S (Boswell & Smith, 2017).

Unlike many universities across the country, Penn State's sixty thousand square Pasquerilla Center and the Office for Spiritual and Ethical Development (the student affairs unit that oversees the entire Center and its activities), demonstrate the opportunities leaders in higher education have to support these religious, secular, and spiritual identities on campus. The study examined the efforts of an institution which can be used as a model for other universities to consider. The results provide an opportunity for why a university could consider creating similar physical spaces, and administrative offices.

The Question of Physical Space

The physical spaces present on a college campus are an expression of values (Strange & Banning, 2011). Spaces in which interactions are high, such as academic classrooms with moveable seating, highlight the campus' commitment to collaborative learning environments (2001). So too is the marked commitment to pluralism and religious inclusion when a campus builds or designs multifaith spaces (2001). It is well documented (Shockey, 1989; Hillel International, n.d Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011) that religious communities often include programming in which individuals gather to participate in worship, pray, study, and organize. Spaces which provide familiarity and inclusivity of such opportunities should be evaluated by universities and prioritized (Small, 2015).

Multifaith spaces, those which offer religious, secular, and spiritual students'

opportunities to participate in practices related to their traditions, are becoming more important on campuses because of the drastic increases in religious communities which have begun needing safe and welcoming spaces on campus (Bryant Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman, 2015). For example, Rockenbach and colleagues (2017) find that positive attitudes toward Muslim identities increase with the presence of spaces on campus designed for prayer and meditation. Emergent data from Rockenbach and colleagues (2017) ongoing Interfaith Diversity and Attitudes Longitudinal Study, better known as IDEALS, suggests that the presence of multifaith spaces reduces anxieties and stigmas for students across all forms of religious, secular, and spiritual identities within the institution. These studies show possibilities that creation of multifaith centers and physical spaces may be important to the experience and the larger campus climate of religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion.

Current scholarship on physical space design relating to multifaith spaces remains incomplete. While current data suggested increased student appreciative attitudes towards those of differing beliefs (Bryant Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman, 2015; Rockenbach, Mayhew, Bowman, Morin, & Riggers-Piehl, 2017), data previous to this study was still inadequate to evaluate how multifaith centers supported the overall campus climate of religious, secular, and spiritual identities. The data present in the literature focused previously on students as the unit of analysis and thus evaluated the campus climate based on only the experiences in the sample, leaving out critical variables such as institutional policies and the physical environments which can support religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

Evaluation of the campus climate required more in-depth analysis, and this study offered the unique contribution of utilizing a theoretical framework designed to assess physical environments as the unit of analysis. By focusing on the physical space and the institutional

policies and practices, the study connected Strange and Banning's (2001) theoretical framework from *Educating by Design* with that of the study of religious, secular, and spiritual identity inclusion. The Pasquerilla Center offered insights to how the climate of the university is cultivating a sense of belonging for religiously practicing students. In addition, the study revealed directions in which future research may develop in understanding and evaluating religious, secular, and spiritual identity inclusion. Rationalizing the creation of religious and spiritual centers and spaces has been challenging (Kazanjian & Laurence, 2000), but has gained traction in the last two decades at locations like Portland State University, Pennsylvania State University, the University of Maryland, and others (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). Each university has undertaken efforts to create and enhance their current spaces, from transitioning a historical chapel space at Maryland into a multifaith space to Portland State's administration creating multiuse spaces in the lower level of their student union (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). Evaluating these centers and physical spaces was a cornerstone of the study.

Park (2014) and Edwards (2015) independently utilize case study methodology to analyze campus climate in understanding religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion. For these studies, the methods include understanding and evaluating the ways in which campus climate is affected by the presence of an office for religious and ethical or spiritual life, something which is relatively rare in U.S. public higher education. Both studies examine the physical environments and institutional policies and practices which foster the campus environment. By understanding the campus climate through the use of physical spaces of the center, and the role of the administrative unit in creation and governance of policies and practices using a model more focused on the dimensions of the environment itself, the study offered opportunity to greatly expand the body of research. An opportunity to carefully examine the campus climate, through

the lens of physical environments (Strange & Banning, 2001), and the policies and practices which govern the campus climate was an ideal study for a university and especially Penn State as a public university. By utilizing Strange and Banning's (2001) theoretical framework, thoughtful inquiry has led to a wealth of new data from which to study and research.

Research Questions

The idea that the Pasquerilla Center at Penn State University be the unit of analysis in studying religious, secular, and spiritual identities and specifically that the inquiry need be a public institution of higher education, is the foundation from which this study took shape. Through identification of a bounded case, a study which used multiple methodologies of inquiry and it bound by place, space, and time (Starman, 2013), the current study focused on a central set of questions:

- a) How does a physical environment such as a "multifaith" center support religious, secular, and spiritual diversity of the campus environment?*
- b) What role does a multifaith office and center play in the campus climate of the institution?*
- c) What are the experiences of religiously affiliated students at an institution which has created a center and a physical environment for religious, secular, and spiritual identity?*

Significance of the Study

By studying the physical spaces of the Pasquerilla Center, members of the campus itself are now able to gain a comprehensive understanding of the value of implementing certain policies and practices. The study of Penn State should also offer other institutions insights on

how to best support religious, secular, and spiritual identities on their campuses. The study illuminated for higher education administrators the connections between the physical environments campuses create and support of religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

An additional significant of the study was its intentional qualitative focus. Much of the previous data supporting religious, secular, and spiritual identities utilized quantitative inquiry (Astin, Astin & Lindholm, 2011; Rockenbach et al., 2017). By evaluating the physical environments exclusively through a qualitative inquiry, the study offered the potential for deeper insights and used multiple vantage points (document review, staff insights, student perspectives, etc). This revealed new insights regarding not just why, but how universities can support these identities in our institutions through physical spaces and policies and practices.

Looking Ahead

The following two chapters examine the research by first grounding the study in the current relevant literature and then expanding upon the methodology which best guided the work of understanding institutional climate for leaders in higher education. Chapter 2 begins with a detailed understanding of the larger religious landscape in higher education and the current climates for religious majorities (Christians), religious minorities (Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists, and others) and the non-religious identities (Atheists, Humanists, Agnostics, and others). The review further examined research from the past two decades highlighting higher education's support of religious, secular, and spiritual identities and aligning it with current data on campus climate. Finally, the chapter includes resources for a greater understanding of previous theoretical frameworks used to study religious, secular, and spiritual identity in higher education, offering an alternative theoretical framework for use in my research focusing on campus climate within a bounded case study. Chapter 3 expands upon the methodology and

offers concise rationale for Pennsylvania State University to serve as the site for the study. Table 1 below offers a reference of terminology that was used throughout the study.

Table 1	
<i>Definition of standard words to be used throughout study</i>	
Tradition	The umbrella of belief under which one falls. Traditions are organized sets of beliefs which may be hundreds and thousands of years old and have ritual and practice to them. Examples include Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism, & Islam (Waggoner & Walker, 2018).
Mainline	Associating with the Protestant set of Christian beliefs, most clearly associated as those who are United Methodist, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA), American Baptist, or Episcopal (Waggoner & Walker, 2018).
Protestant	Those identities that associate with the term “mainline” and are made up of the Christian denominations formed in the last five hundred years from the Protestant Reformation. Examples include Lutherans, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Baptists, and their affiliate denominations, of which 39,000 exist across the world (Waggoner & Walker, 2018).
Evangelical	Made up of Christian members who come from traditions that fall outside of the mainline and Roman Catholic denominations. Often times associated on campuses with groups including Campus Crusade for Christ/CRU, Navigators, Intervarsity, Young Life, and Chi Alpha (Waggoner & Walker, 2018).
Parachurch	A standard term used to identify Christian groups which fall outside of mainline denominational setting and on campus are made up mostly of Evangelical Christian groups. Somewhat interchangeable with Evangelical but based on organizational structure not a belief and values orientation (Waggoner & Walker, 2018).
Atheist	An individual who does not believe in the existence of a god or gods and most likely follows scientific method as the way to rationalize the world around them (PRC 2015).
Humanist	An individual who stresses the importance of humanity over that of the supernatural and the inner connections of human beings to one another as their way to rationalize the world around them (Liddell & Stedman, 2011).
Agnostic	An individual who does not claim to know whether a god or gods exist and is often more concerned with the connections of humanity to rationalize the world around them (Liddell & Stedman, 2011).
Religious	A shared system of beliefs, principles, or doctrines related to a belief in and worship of a supernatural power or power regarded as creator(s) and governor(s) of the universe (Love, 2001, p.8) This term often refers to organized faith communities, including but not limited to Christianity (including Roman Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox Christians, and

	Evangelicals), Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Hinduism (Waggoner & Walker, 2018).
Table 1. (continued)	
Secular	The term “secular” is an umbrella term for non-theistic people of any identity label (Liddell & Stedman, 2011) The term was adopted in language throughout the former “Religious and Spiritual Programs” portion of the Council for the Advanced of Standards (CAS) standards which was revised and included, and the phrase Religious, Secular, and Spiritual was created (CAS, 2015).
Spiritual	Spirituality involves a desire to realize one’s meaning, purpose, and authenticity and is a meaningful connection with others in the community and an orientation toward a higher power that is “set apart from the ordinary and transcends the self” (Bryant, Choi, & Yasuno, 2003, p.724)
Space	Dimensions, features, and environments through which activities can take place as related to the research topic (Strange & Banning, 2001).
Worldview	Worldview represents a guiding philosophy on life that is informed by one’s religious beliefs, spiritual views, and/or secular perspective (Bryant Rockenbach, Mayhew, Kinarsky & Interfaith Youth Core, 2014).
Campus Climate	Describes the attitudes, behaviors, standards, and practices of individuals operating within a campus community, specifically as they relate to different subgroups’ access, inclusion, and success within the institutional environment (Rankin & Reason, 2008).
Multifaith Center	A facility and physical space that seeks to support the religious, secular, and spiritual wellbeing of everyone on campus and provides opportunities through physical environments for individuals to practice their faith-based practices (University of Toronto).
Non-religious identities	A term used throughout this study used to create an “umbrella” for all individuals who would not claim a religious or secular identity. Could be used to identify “secular”, “humanist” and “atheist” identities as a whole.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding the current climate for religious, secular, and spiritual identities in higher education required a lens which considered multiple facets of the university. This included the physical environments in which students of all religious and non-religious identities can come to practice and feel welcomed, the multifaith centers that promote religious, secular, and spiritual intersections, the overarching campus climates manifested through policies and practices, and the cultural diversity experiences that can only be understood through the viewpoints of staff and students. The following sections begin to outline the aforementioned literature in which the current study took place. Each of the sections, beginning with the current religious diversity of the United States, then following with an understanding of campus climate, an examination of current forms of religious spaces, the data and research undergirding rationale for why higher education should support and engage religious, secular, and spiritual identities, and finally the current data on the student experience highlights the current literature which is pertinent to the study. This work built a roadmap leading toward the methodology and rationale for the study.

It should be noted that throughout the study, the nomenclature of “religious,” “secular,” and “spiritual” was used often as a placeholder representing an attempted inclusion of all religious and non-religious traditions. “Religious, secular, and spiritual identities” is a very recent phrase used to encapsulate the work of scholars and practitioners. Developed by a team I was asked to pull together by Dr. Margorie Savage, chair of the Board of the Council on the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), the preeminent organization for

enforcing standards in higher education, (CAS, 2015) the formerly named “Religious and Spiritual Life Programs” reviewers found that the added use of “secular” supports greater inclusion in this area of higher education. The team, which included chaplains, campus ministers, student affairs administrators, and members of the Secular Student Alliance, came together to develop new language. Whereas previous efforts attempted to encompass all identities under the term “interfaith” (I.F.Y.C., n.d.), it was determined in multiple venues that “interfaith” alongside other oft-used words like “multifaith” were failing to include those who were not a part of a religious or faith community. When 36 percent of individuals in American society now claim a “spiritual but not religious” identity (PRC, 2015), alongside a growing segment of the population neither claiming “spiritual” nor “religious” identity, our language requires evolution and adaptation.

For the purposes of this study, anyone identified as “religious” would identify as a specific tradition. This may be Catholic Christian, Protestant Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, or Jewish (Nielsen & Small, 2019). Spiritual refers to those who may not identify with any tradition or might identify with multiple traditions (Schmalzbauer, 2019). Secular would describe anyone in the Atheist, Agnostic, Humanist, or Skeptic community (Nielsen & Small, 2019). The Pew Research Center (2015) describes those claiming no particular religious identity as “Nones,” drawing from the term found on standardized testing in religious identification. This category, which has been found to be far too broad, often includes segments of Humanists, Atheists, and Agnostics, as well as Wiccans (PRC, 2015). Nevertheless, “nones” make up a segment of non-religious identify that reviewers of the CAS standards felt important to include in diversity efforts. The term was adopted and language throughout the former “Religious and Spiritual

Programs” portion of the CAS standards was revised and included, and the phrase “Religious, Secular, and Spiritual” was created (CAS, 2015). In understanding and seeking to provide a broad understanding of the campus climate of all forms of religious and non-religious identity, this study considered the unique vantage points of many of these religious, secular, and spiritual individuals and communities.

Religious Diversity in America

The religious landscape in America is shifting. Changing religious commitments and an increase in worldview diversity in the United States has set in motion new realities for a country that for most of its existence has been dominated by Christianity. The number of self-identifying Christians fell 7.4 percent from 2007-2014 (Pew Research Center [PRC] 2015). This data is closely linked to the rise of what the PRC (2015) describes as “nones,” a term used in standardized testing when individuals claim “none” in their religious identity preference. These “nones,” or those who are not “religiously unaffiliated,” rose 16.7 percent between 2007-2014 and now stands at more than one-fifth of the total U.S. population (PRC, 2015). One might expect these significant changes to tell of a coming end to religion in the United States. Yet, to do so is to fail to appreciate the broader context of a changing religious landscape that now can best be described as religious, secular, and spiritual.

While religious identity in the United States is dramatically shifting, seven in ten U.S. adults continue to claim an affiliation with Christianity. Gallop (2017) finds that 23 percent of the total U.S. population identifies as Roman Catholic, while just slightly under fifty percent hold a Protestant or other affiliation within the Christian tradition. While declining over the past 40 years (Public Religion Research Institute [PRRI], 2017), in the U.S. Christianity remains the overwhelming core of religious identity.

The growth of other traditions in the U.S. is what is helping to grow religious pluralism. This is a trend that has continued to increase since the 1960s. Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Muslims, and other religious minorities now account for 5.9 percent of the total U.S. population (PRC, 2015). This becomes clear when one considers the percentages of children raised within traditions who continue to claim that same tradition throughout their lives. Jews (75%), Muslims (77%), and Hindus (80%) all demonstrate high retention rates of those members who were raised within the tradition, a stabilizing factor to which Christian traditions, especially Protestant and Roman Catholic traditions within the U.S. religious landscape, cannot attest (PRC, 2015). Collectively, these trends demonstrate to the growing diversity of religious, secular, and spiritual diversity within the American landscape and begin to be reflected in our college campuses in even more dynamic ways.

For the purpose of this study, religious communities have been aggregated into general categories. Jewish communities are largely broken down between Orthodox, Reform, and Conservative communities, alongside Reconstructionist Jews communities that are less prominent. No matter the community, the study identified these students as “Jewish.” As well, there exist any number of Protestant denominations in the United States, included the United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., the United Church of Christ, Episcopal Church USA, and American Baptist Church (Schmalzbauer, 2019) but these are aggregated simply as “Protestant Christian.” Any Christian community that does not hold to a specific denominational home is described in the study as “Evangelical Christian.” More on this will be described later. For now, I turn to the larger understanding of higher education’s changing religious landscape.

Higher Education's Changing Religious Affiliation

Changes in the American landscape are mirrored on our college campuses, with certain trends being elevated, a further sign of the dramatic shift in religious, secular, and spiritual diversity in America. More than 25 percent of the national population of college students claim no religious preference (PRC, 2015), with certain additional trends such as one-half of all college students now claiming no religious tradition whatsoever (Putnam & Campbell, 2010). Yet, two-thirds of first-year college students surveyed credited religious and spiritual beliefs and their accompanying communities as an important part of their campus experience (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011). Of those that claim an affiliation with a religious denomination, high levels of participation in activities such as worship services (81%) and prayer (69%) were noted (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011). Additionally, Muslims now make up 1.7 percent of college students, and the number of Buddhist college students has more than tripled in the last 20 years (Eagen et.al., 2014). The literature identifies a “settling” of sorts in the religious, secular, and spiritual identities field, with three clear groups emerging, all of which might be understood in greater detail: Religious majorities (Christianity), religious minorities (all other affiliated religious groups including Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists, and non-religious identities (Humanists, Atheists, and Agnostics, which are often lumped together as earlier described as “nones”).

In the United States, the history of higher education is marred with a history of Christian privilege and hegemony (Wilder, 2014. Many of the early institutions created as the United States expanded westward were those of private protestant Christian and Catholic Christian institutions (Wilder, 2014. When the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 established public universities across the United States, it did so still tied to those roots. Over time, chapels were

established at universities across the country, many erected post-World War II as memorials to those who fought (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). The creation of these can be said to be directly tied to the rise of higher education with the G-I bill that allowed millions of veterans to enroll in the late 1940s and 1950s (Schmalzbauer, 2019). This is the story of Penn State and their Eisenhower chapel and ultimately is a primary reason the Pasquerilla Center remains to this day very oriented toward Christianity. It is to this group and its students that I turn to next.

Christian Students

Christianity remains the prominent religion on campus. A full 70.7 percent of the U.S. population identifies as Christian, a significant majority (PRC, 2017). Yet, for college students the number of students who identify as Christian is declining, with now as much as 40 percent of the population of college students identify as having no particular religious identity, mostly being made up of formerly Christian-identifying individuals (PRC, 2014). This demographic shift is the most significant in U.S. history and offers an opportunity for discussion within the institution of the emergence of alternative religious, secular, and spiritual identities to be included within the campus equity efforts.

Protestant Christianity has throughout its history held significant influence upon higher education in the United States and thus on America itself (Cole, 2012; Newman, 2014). Westward expansion after the Revolutionary War was in part due to the creation of private universities sponsored by Christian denominations who were supported by those who wished to see conversion of Native Americans and often upheld support for slavery (Wilder, 2014). The growth of schooling in the West as a method of western expansion and Manifest Destiny was heavily encouraged by the U.S. government, leading to the founding of thousands of private

Protestant and Catholic schools that today dot the national landscape (Shockley, 1989; Wilder 2014).

The most visible markers of Christianity on these private colleges and universities are the chaplains and their affiliated offices (Forster-Smith, 2013). And while the chaplaincies have existed on private, mostly faith-based institutions for over 200 years (Forster-Smith, 2013), Christianity continues to be fostered “on” public university campuses through external “campus ministries,” created in response to the Morrill Land-Grant Act and the growth of the public institution. First started by the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), and expanding in the 1800s and early 1900s, the campus ministries have grown, expanded, and stood the test of time (Shockley, 1989). In the mid 1930s, the beginnings of a post-denominational world saw the beginnings of groups like Intervarsity, Campus Crusade (now known as CRU) and Navigators (Shockley, 1989). These groups grew dynamically after World War II but have in the last 30 years been marginalized from campuses, a response of institutional policies emitting from attitudes of administrators which have pushed back on religious identities being included in campus equity efforts (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012).

Yet, most university policies uphold a sense of Christian privilege, mostly due to Western culture’s use of the Gregorian Calendar, created in 1582 to set the appropriate dates for Easter and other Christian holidays (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). Because of the use of this calendar, academic calendars are reflective of breaks for the most important religious holidays for only the Christian tradition, including Christmas and Easter (Delbanco, 2015). This privilege has led to many of the marginalized faith communities to blame Christian students for their own marginalization (Moran et al., 2007).

Attitudes by administration to push back on Christian and in general religious identity on campus, members of the Evangelical community now feel marginalized themselves, something that factually is hard to argue because of the previously mentioned campus policies (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). Overall, there is marked complexity in higher education as Christianity continues to dominate the population and yet many of the most visible and long-standing religious organizations feel as though the university does not value their presence. Looking at one of the specific Christian traditions reveals a more complicated understanding of who does and not feel welcomed and included.

Experiences of Evangelical students

Evangelical Christian students make up a sizable population of the U.S. population, at over 29 percent (PRC, 2015) as well as some of the most outspoken members of the campus religious community (Schmalzbauer, 2019). The evangelical nature of these Christians on campus is oftentimes misunderstood and underappreciated within institutions (Schmalzbauer, 2019). Campus-wide targeted proselytizing by evangelical groups can create experiences in which traditionally marginalized religious communities like Muslims, Jews, and even Roman Catholics, feel unsafe to practice publicly (Craft, 2003). And when attempting to support evangelical students, their attitudes and beliefs about the “liberal campus environments” and attempts by administration to provide an all-encompassing welcome to all forms of religious, secular, and spiritual identities can be come into direct competition with the university’s attempts to provide them with inclusive policies as well (Craft, 2003).

New evidence is revealing the hostilities toward evangelical students and the liberal environment of higher education (Mayhew & Rockenbach, 2017). The attitudes of members of the non-evangelical communities may be affecting the campus conditions that promote

marginalization of evangelical students (Mayhew, Rockenbach, & Bowman 2016). The recipients of administrator hostility, evangelical students report feelings of being silenced and marginalized on campus (Moran, et.al, 2007).

Feelings related to this can be attributed to the secularism of the college campus (Marsden, 1996) and prejudiced views by administrators (Craft, 2003; Yancey, 2011). Attitudes of evangelical students may be partially to blame for these feelings of marginalization.

Bloomenfeld (2006) highlights that Christian students may be experienced a loss of their Christian privilege unknowingly. He highlights that in the current culture, bringing to light such Christian privilege may result in defiance and active resistance, leading toward feelings of marginalized that are perceived but are not real (Bloomenfeld, 2006). Because the individual is experiencing a climate in which others identities are being given equal support and may be emphasized in order to foster equity, the dominant tradition may feel as though their own identities are being diminished (2006). This could be said to be occurring on many campuses at current (Schmalzbauer, 2019).

Smith, (1998) in his landmark study on evangelical Christians, argues that the belief that many Evangelicals hold that they are part of a minority subculture may be perpetuated by the [perceived] modern pluralistic society. Even from their peer Christians, evangelicals often feel separate from mainline Protestant Christians, claiming that they are “authentic Christians” (Moran, et.al, 2007, p.29). Their more conservative moral constructive (Bryant, 2011) can often come into tension with the institution and its values, leading to feelings of resentment of faculty and administration as well as with peers, (Mayhew Hoggan, & Rockenbach, 2016). Yet these self-proclaimed evangelical Christians appear to flourish despite these perceived conflicts and tension (Smith, 1998). Evangelical students present an illustrative case of the need for the study to be

constructivism in nature, allowing for a campus experience that may have multiple, non-conforming perspectives. Just because one faith community may largely feel welcomed and included in the institution does not mean that all communities will feel welcome, thus the need to provide space for differences of viewpoints across the religious, secular, and spiritual identities. As we move into identities that have historically been known to be marginalized in U.S. society, we begin to see parallel but unique experiences between the aforementioned evangelicals and Jewish, Muslim, and nonreligious identities.

Experiences of Catholic Students

Surprisingly, limited research existed linking student experience of Roman Catholic students in higher education literature. Often placed in a general “Christian” umbrella, the experiences of Catholics are hard to fully understand from previous research. Studies considering Catholic institutions remain abundant and highlight the support of Catholic institutions, though these do not directly relate to student experiences.

The most relevant texts related to Catholic identities in higher education came from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and their work dating back to 1996 in *The Gospel on Campus* (Galligan-Stierle, 1996). Catholic identifying students tend to maintain their religious identity when enrolled and engaged on campuses that include Newman Centers, the movement of Catholic Campus ministries present at over 800 colleges and universities across the United States (Galligan-Stierle, 1996). Current data was inconclusive when considering if Catholic students have more welcoming experiences than other Christian students on public university campuses (Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman 2015). Too often in data sets, it appears that Catholic students are placed in the same categories with other Christians.

Current research from the Interfaith Diversity Experiences and Attitudes Longitudinal Study (Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman, 2015) detailed that Catholic and public institutions of higher education are perceived to have more structured worldview diversity, thus the institutions appeared to be more attuned to the needs of the diverse religious community that now makes up the United States (Engaging Worldview n.d.) Morey and Piderit (2006) argue that Catholic higher education should ultimately be about the inclusion of all identities, including those of the diverse beliefs and experiences of Catholic themselves. The experiences of Catholic students did appear to hold up to this belief and Catholic students tended to report more welcoming experiences at Catholic institutions than at other institutions (Mayhew, Bowman, & Rockenbach, 2014).

Experiences of Protestant Students

Protestant students often affiliate with one of several communities on campus which remain visible in today's higher education world. These include the United Campus Ministries, Wesley Foundations, Lutheran Campus Ministries, and at times Canterbury Houses (Schmalzbauer, 2018; Shockley, 1989). Current literature on Protestants, similar to Roman Catholic students, detailed little by way of individual experiences of Protestant students, again placing them within the larger umbrella of "Christian." This area of Christian identity, which has historically been at the forefront of some of the larger social movements in higher education (Shockley, 1989) is struggling in the 21st Century to survive during times due to financial challenges within Protestant denominations (Schmalzbauer, 2019).

Schmalzbauer (2019) detailed how Protestant ministries have lost much of their presence on campus as denominations have largely cut funding. This has left Protestant students with few places to go on campus in which to find community and practice what tended to be more

progressive Christian values (Schmalzbauer, 2019). Protestant students often found themselves at odds with Evangelical student perspectives and struggle to share their more progressive viewpoints due to attitudes toward Christian identities on campus (Goodman, Giess, & Patel, 2019). Yet, Protestant Christians remain present on campus through the presence of organizations like the Wesley Foundation, Lutheran Campus Ministries, and other historic campus ministries which are present across the U.S. (Shockley, 1989).

At the many Protestant Affiliated institutions of higher education, Chaplains and Deans of religious life can offer a sense of safety and belonging that public institutions lack (Forster-Smith, 2014). But data is not present that directly relates this to the student experience that is conclusive. This is quite different from the religious minorities: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and others, to which we now turn.

Religious Minorities

Judaism

The most well-funded and well-organized religious minority on college campuses is Judaism (Shockley, 1989). Jewish identity represents only 1.9 percent of the American population (Pew, 2014) but twice that on college campuses (Hillel, 2015). Ninety-five percent of all Jewish students will attend college (Hillel, 2015), demonstrating the highest academic commitment amongst religious communities. Much of Judaism's prominence in college populations is not just due to aforementioned commitments by individuals to the academic experience, but through the communities of Hillel International, the largest Jewish organization in the world (Hillel International, n.d.). While still small in comparison to the over 4,000 universities in the United States today, Hillel International has over 550 chapters in the United States, and almost 700 worldwide (Hillel). Hillel's mission since 1923 to support Jewish identity

on campus holds a unique and important place in higher education and has been instrumental in responding to the many incidents on campus of antisemitism that continue to plague the Jewish community.

The rise of Antisemitic incidents in higher education is of monumental importance within higher education. Jewish-identifying students struggle to be understood as a marginalized religious community, as constructed cultural stereotypes identify that them as neither marginalized nor in need of accommodation (Goren, 2014). During the 2015 protest of students at the University of Missouri and its administrations' stance on racial tensions on campus, Jewish-identifying students were found to struggle to support the movement, because of "outsider perceptions" of their identity with majority culture (Dreyfus, Humphrey, Mahboob, & Martin, 2015). These incidents are not isolated, leading to perpetuating stereotyping of Jews as having cultural "whiteness" (Mayhew, Bowman, Rockenbach, Selznick, & Riggers-Piehl, 2018).

Antisemitism can be a problematic term and has multiple understandings within the Jewish community. Attitudes toward Jewish students and perceived antisemitism was at times tied to the institutional policies of Hillel International and its overarching support for Israel (Bowman, Rockenbach, Mayhew, Riggers-Piehl & Hudson, 2017). Jewish beliefs on campus that are tied uniformly to one of the mostly divisive global conflicts often perpetuate attitudes towards the Jewish community in favor of Palestinians and against what is known as the "Israeli Apartheid" (Saxe, Sasson, Graham, & Hecht, 2015). Pro-Palestinian students will often introduce attempts to create a sanctioning process of Israeli products and companies known as BDS (Boycott, Divest, Sanction) through which the founders seek to eliminate Israel as a nation (Miller, 2018). This has led to significant strain within minority religious communities on campus and has left many Jewish students feeling significantly oppressed not just by the

institution, but by their peers as well. Responding to these concerns of antisemitism requires a detailed understanding of the situations and likely academic intervention. Soifer (1991) finds a gap in education from the liberal arts community in explicitly offering content within the academic setting related to Jewish identities and proposes that antisemitism might be somewhat mitigated if the academy were to educate its students more comprehensively. The Interfaith Youth Core, drawing upon its framework of interfaith dialogue, suggests students “build bridges” with each other and overcome the things that divide them (IFYC, n.d.). Certainly, one way to respond to these direct incidents can be through dialogue and academic experience, but creating institutional policies and practices, such as consistent Kosher options as well guidelines regarding hate speech, can help to demonstrate commitment to Jewish identity on campus (Nielsen & Small, 2019).

On many campuses, Jewish communities often find an unwelcoming environment due to the religious needs of their communities. Chabad, a more recently created organization focusing its efforts those with orthodox Jewish identities (Chabad, n.d.) is increasingly in tension with public university policies which often do not demonstrate commitment to upholding the free exercise clause of the United States Constitution when it comes to holiday-excused absences. Many college campuses appear to give leniency toward faculty in decision making for absences of Jewish holidays such as Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover, days that often fall at critical junctures in the academic calendar (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012. Upholding one set of traditions (i.e. Christianity’s Christian and Easter holidays) while denying Jewish students their sacred holidays is not just a violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, but a clear preference for those who will receive accommodation on campus (Hillel, n.d.).

Recently, higher education institutions began responding to the complex needs of Jewish

students, creating more inclusive environments through the incorporation of Jewish studies programs, support for Hillel programs and initiatives, and Kosher dining hall plans (Koren, Saxe, & Fleisch, 2016). These efforts are being used as a way to enhance recruitment of Jewish students and may lead to a cyclical system of support, wherein the presence of more Jewish students on campus promotes greater inclusivity of policies supporting Jewish identities and thus enhances recruitment efforts further (Koren & Fleisch, 2016). Due to their significant history on campuses, Jewish-identifying students will likely remain visible on campus. Their support by the institutions may serve as a bellwether of the support of other marginalized religious identities, to which we now turn.

Islam

Muslim religious identities make up just over one percent of the college student population, more than double than the percentage within the general U.S. population (Rockenbach, Mayhew, Bowman, Morin, & Riggers-Piehl, 2017). Since the 9/11 terrorists attacks, the numbers of those who identify as Muslim significantly grown, as Muslim Student Association (MSA) chapters now number over 600 on campuses across the U.S. (Islamic Society of North America, n.d.). Yet, much like their Jewish counterparts, Muslims on campus struggle for their place in higher education as Christian privilege within institutional policies and practices may be implicitly undercutting the value of these and other religious affiliations (Ahmadi & Cole, 2014). This can be seen when universities knowingly support Christian students observing Lenten practices of “no meat Fridays” while ignoring the many Halal needs of students, and especially a lack of expanded dining hall hours during Ramadan. On college campuses, visible symbols of the Muslim identity, namely the wearing of the veil or Hijab by many Muslim woman on campus, can stigmatize Islam as a conservative religion which does not

value women (Rockenbach, Mayhew, Bowman, Morin, & Riggers-Piehl, 2017). But it is important to note the ways in which Muslim identity is visible and practiced on campus may change depending upon the culture form which the individual comes, whether they are part of the Shiite or Sunni traditions of Islam, or simply based on individual choice (Ahmadi & Cole, 2014). It is important to note that Muslim identities are not homogenous, and perceptions of their conservative values may underestimate viewpoint differential from within Muslim student identity, creating stereotypes which hinder engagement (Rockenbach, Mayhew, Bowman, Morin, and Riggers-Piehl, 2017). These immediate attitudes can create hostile environments for students who are simply attempting to practice their tradition.

Understanding viewpoints of Muslim students requires care. Amongst other marginalized religious communities, Muslim identities are often viewed more favorably by Hindus, Buddhists, and some Jews, especially in light of potential realities that these communities hold common bonds of marginalization on campus (Rockenbach, Mayhew, Bowman, Morin, & Rigger-Piehl, 2017). Yet, Christian students, specifically Protestants, Evangelicals, and Eastern Orthodox students hold lower appreciative attitudes toward Muslims than their peers (Rockenbach, Mayhew, Bowman, Morin, & Rigger-Piehl, 2017). Due to the large influx of Christian religious identities on campus, hostility continues to exist towards Muslim students on college campuses (Ahmadi & Cole, 2014). Incidents of Islamaphobia remain rampant on college campuses today (Thrush & Haberman, 2017). Campuses have devised a number of strategies through which to counter these attitudes and provide support for Muslim identities. Many examples exist in interfaith dialogue endeavors (Patel, 2007; Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman, 2015), but more institutional policy and practice efforts may be effective as well. Rockenbach and colleagues (2017) find that presence of multifaith centers may directly influence appreciative attitudes of

non-Muslims toward Muslim identities and create more inclusive environments for all students. These centers, when fostering effective interchange of ideas, such as programming or simply space usage which brings together diverse religious and nonreligious identities, may be helpful in framing creative engagements and decreasing stigmas (Rockenbach et al., 2017).

Schaidle (2016) argues for a holistic approach that values visible and invisible concerns for Muslim students. In interviews with practitioners and students, Schaidle finds that gym hours specifically designated for Muslim women, appropriate prayer spaces with attached washing stations, Halal dietary options in dining halls, and expanded dining hall hours during Ramadan can all be helpful in promoting a positive campus environment for Muslims (Schaidle, 2016). Additionally, for students who continue to feel undersupported, special counseling opportunities as well opportunities for Muslim students to offer cultural awareness to the rest of the campus community can be especially helpful (Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman, 2015). The current political climate has helped to uplift certain concerns related to Muslim identities, especially those in which Muslim students from certain areas around the world, namely the Middle East, are at greater threat (Ahmadi & Cole, 2014). These visible political and cultural influences can help to elevate conversations but can also stymie support for other marginalized religious traditions as administrators attempt to sort out the complexities present in Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and the “nones.”

Hinduism and other traditions

Hinduism in America represents an extremely small portion of the general population but is growing in higher education at rates that far exceed that representation (PRC, 2014). In all, Hindus represent only about 0.7 percent of the U.S. population, but more than 1 percent of the population of the college campus and climbing (PRC, 2014). While the third largest global

religious tradition, largely because of including large populations in India, Hindus make up a small fraction of U.S. religious diversity (PRC, 2014). In all, Hindus make up nearly one billion members of the global population but have not grown rapidly in the United States. Only since the Nationalization and Immigration Act of 1974 have Hindu identities in the U.S. started to be seen prominently in the population (PRC, 2014). Hindus in America represent another of the marginalized religious communities on campuses who are known to use prayer and meditative space, similar to Muslims. Support for Hindus on university campuses is extremely underrepresented in the literature. Chandler (2013) explores multiple ways in which support for Hindu identity is largely built on the creation of a “chaplain” or Hindu staff assigned to work with the students on campus. Campus policies and practices which support Hindu prayer, including the creation of designated worship space, are of “immense value” to the support of these identities (Diller, 2018). Additionally, support for Hindu religious holidays, especially for Diwali, through the academic calendar, can demonstrate visible support for Hindu identity by university administration, validating for the entire campus the identities of this small but growing population (Chandler, 2013).

Making Hinduism visible in institutions of higher education may be easier than one might think. The well-known but misappropriated Holi celebration can be an important and simple way to show support and religious inclusion (Diller, 2018). Institutions across the country are moving away from “color runs” instead helping students to gain appreciative value of the most visible celebration in Hindu culture (Diller, 2018). Giving agency to Hindu communities to designate within the academic calendar which days they would most wish to highlight can also be a sign of support as well. Efforts focused on programming for Hindu identities promote a greater sense of appreciate attitudes and an environment of belonging amongst Hindu students (Astin, Astin, &

Lindholm, 2011). Overall, support for Hindus is amongst the needs higher education should consider when challenging the current structures of support for religious, secular, and spiritual identities. As we turn toward non-religious identities, the challenge becomes more arduous, and yet imperative, as one considers support for the fastest growing “tradition” in the sample. While significant literature exists for the traditions outlined above, research is absent to support and understand many of the eastern traditions which hold marginalized status in the U.S. Sikhs, often misappropriated as Muslims, have not been well documented in higher education studies in the United States. So too is the absence of literature regarding Jains, Confucianists, Buddhists, and Ba’hai (which itself is the second most geographically diverse religion in the world) (PRC, 2014). Each of these traditions make up a segment of research that is deeply needed in future studies. The last segment of the population, to which we now turn, is the fastest growing but often the most confusing for researchers and practioners alike to determine how to support them: the nonreligious.

Nonreligious/Secular Identities

Over 27 percent of freshman entering colleges and universities in the fall of 2014 make up the population known as the “nones,” a group of individuals who claim no particular religious tradition (Eagan et al., 2014). These individuals, often known more commonly under titles of atheists, humanists, or agnostics, represent a newer area of inquiry by researchers in higher education (PRC, 2014). Insights reveal new importance in supporting these nonreligious identities, what this study deems under the term “secular.” Bowman et al. (2017) find marginalization amongst atheist students on campus in the form of poor appreciative attitudes from others. While other marginalized religious traditions including Hinduism and Buddhism are linked to greater appreciative attitudes by students, attitudes toward theist, Christian, and Muslim

students are often poor, leading to a sense of unwelcome amongst many atheist-identifying students (Bowman et. al. 2017).

Further data reveals significant feelings of unwelcome for atheists in environments which differ from their beliefs, namely private Christian colleges and universities (Moran, 2004).

Nonreligious identifying students report the lowest levels of student satisfaction in their choice of universities, lower levels of valuing their academic experiences, and lower numbers of positive interpersonal relationships in comparison to other groups including the minority religious and the Protestant Christian groups (Bowman & Smedley, 2013). These all demonstrate a campus climate that is increasingly hostile toward “secular” identities. Small and Bowman (2012) further highlight nonreligious student wellbeing as a principal challenge for nonreligious identifying students. Amongst their sample, Christian students held the highest levels of eudemonic (the experience of pleasure related to the meaning of events and activities) and hedonic (the experience of general pleasure in activities) wellbeing, while amongst marginalized religious identities and non-religious identities, student sense of well-being falls significantly (McMahan & Eastes, 2011; Small & Bowman, 2012). The authors posit that this is likely due to the “challeng[es] these students face as a product of their...religious practices (or lack thereof)” (McMahan & Eastes, 2011, p. 499).

Nonreligious identifying students are often raised in households in which parents are not religiously affiliated or have themselves previously rejected religious traditions due to a number of concerns (Baker & Smith, 2009). But not all individuals have this experience. This would misconstrue the realities of nonreligious identities and those that fall under the “nones” category. Many Eastern religious traditions might include those who identify as “atheist” including some Hindus and Buddhists (Diller, 2018).

Additionally, Pew Research Center's use of the term "none" misappropriates the idea that all students within the sample are atheists when instead, much of the population is likely to be more "spiritual but not religious" (SBNR), a nomenclature that represents a significant portion of students who would still identify as connected to a religious identity, even if not connected to a community of worshippers (Bidwell, 2018). The entire misuse of the "none" category can be linked to a lack of understanding of the fluidity of religious beliefs, especially amongst the growing population that hold multi-religious identities, meaning they may practice or be served by two or more identities (Bidwell, 2018).

Smith, Marsden, and Kim (2012) continue to find that those nonreligious identifying students still identify with some practices related to spirituality, including beliefs in a higher power and an afterlife, and even note that 32 percent pray "at least occasionally" (Smith, Marsden, & Kim, 2012, p. 9). The SBNR students should be supported under the umbrella for religious inclusion (Patel, Montero, Love, & Geiss, 2016). Supporting students with these identities again becomes a question of supporting a campus climate that is inclusive of all identities. Nonreligious students perceive a negative campus climate for nonreligious individuals on campus (Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman, 2015).

Campus climate includes support from educators (Moran, 2003) as well as through the student experience of worldview commitment and appreciative values amongst other students; the latter is a significant aspect of perceiving a positive campus climate for one's own identity (Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman, 2015). It is unsurprising then that nonreligious identifying students hold negative appreciative attitudes toward Protestant and evangelical Christians, the two groups who hold the lowest appreciative values toward nonreligious students (Bowman, Rockenbach, Mayhew, Riggers-Piehl, & Hudson, 2017). Supporting and accommodating for

students' nonreligious identities becomes especially important in the context of equity and inclusion efforts. Liddell and Stedman (2011) focus on those equity efforts as related to "language and practices on campus" as well as "identify(ing) and provid(ing) safe spaces for nonreligious students within the campus environment" (Liddell & Stedman, 2011, p. 6).

If members of the campus community can understand the larger cultural narrative which includes the fact that most Americans would not vote for an Atheist for president (Jones, 2007), they would realize that many of the reasons why atheist students are not speaking up and visibly showing their feelings of marginalization has to do with fear of stereotyping (Goodman & Mueller, 2009). Until the campus climate becomes more welcoming of these nonreligious identities, students will continue to privately feel marginalized, will keep to themselves regarding their beliefs, but will continue to display in surveys a high level of dissatisfaction with their university experience, even if administrators believe there is no such problem in today's "antireligious" environment.

Faith Development Theory as an Aspect of Study

It should be noted throughout this dissertation, human development theory and specifically Fowler's (1981 Stages of Faith research is absent from the study. He, alongside the work of others, are a significant area of inquiry related to how individuals "grow" in their religious development. But Fowler's work can potentially cloud the research with overly Christian themes which I attempted to avoid in a study of this multifaith nature, as well as that they did not pertain specifically to the unit of analysis (campus climate) being studied. Despite the need to have greater understanding of students commitment to religiosity (Li & Murphy

2017), the focus of this study sought to remain specifically tied to the policies, practices, and especially the physical spaces which can inform a student's sense of belonging.

Because the study did use focus groups and interviews with students, it is important to consider Park's (2014) Faith Development Theory and its components in understanding and evaluating student experiences. The component of the theory, (knowing, dependence, and community), comprise the worldview experiences of most religious, secular, and spiritual identifying aspects of college student development. Parks (2014) argues that each of these ways is fluid amongst college student populations and can influence their experiences on campus. For example, those who demonstrate "tested commitment" ways of knowing will be able to pinpoint specific instances in which they sensed belonging on campus, while those in the "probing" commitment stage, may be less able to be specific. Likewise, students who find "mentoring" communities on campus will often sense a greater belonging on campus than those in "diffuse" communities (Parks, 2014). These developmental markers, which are often determined by age, experience, and resources (including the presence of full time religiously affiliated staff) may play a role in the student experiences evaluated in the study.

In summary, higher education presents a representative landscape of the larger American culture. Campuses that are welcoming of diverse religious, secular, and spiritual identities are fostering an appreciation of different worldviews in the larger American culture (Bryant Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2013; Mayhew, Bowman, Rockenbach, Selznick, & Riggers-Piehl, 2018). The creation of a supportive campus climate offers the potential to prepare individuals for a greater appreciative value of religious, secular, and spiritual identities both during and after their experiences within the institution. Evaluating the campus climate must include a greater

understanding of all forms of religious, secular, and spiritual identities as a way to come to understand the realities of those not just from one tradition, but from each individually and collectively. Unfortunately, research seeking to understand the importance of environments that support religious, secular, and spiritual identities did not begin until just over twenty years ago.

Campus Climate Research

The field of inquiry known as “campus climate research” has its origins in the aftermath of the Los Angeles race riots of 1992. Soon after, Hurtado and colleagues (1998) began analysis and criticism of higher education’s deep racial climate concerns. For over 25 years, campus climate research has expanded to include diversity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, and religious experiences (Cuyjet, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2011). The nature of the study sought to include these frameworks and expand upon them by considering further physical environment analysis.

Defining campus climate has been challenging and nuanced since its beginnings (Hart & Fellabaum, 2008). Rankin and Reason (2008) describe campus climate as the attitudes, behaviors, standards, and practices of individuals operating within a campus community, specifically as they relate to different subgroups’ access, inclusion, and success within the institutional environment. The major features of campus climate are: (1) its primary emphasis on common participant views of a wide array of organizational phenomena that allow for comparison among groups or over time; (2) its focus on current patterns of beliefs and behaviors; and (3) its often ephemeral or malleable character. Climate is pervasive, potentially inclusive of a broad array of organizational phenomena, yet easily focused to fit the researchers’ or the

administrators' interests (Pederson & Spencer, 1990). Recent studies on campus climate have utilized Hurtado and colleagues (1998) dimensions of campus climate framework for inquiry. Additions to campus climate framework includes studies on worldview climate (Bryant, Wickliffe, Mayhew, & Bartell Behringer, 2009) and additional dimensions of "organizational diversity" being added to Hurtado's efforts by Milem et al., (2005).

The field of campus climate research has at times been met with resistance. Harper (2015) relates that while sharing experiences of campus climate research, certain universities have asked for "less harsh" analyses so as to avoid negative public perceptions. Hartocollis (2017) in reviewing Missouri State University's 2016 incidents around racism on campus, finds that institutions may be ignoring clear signs while missing opportunities for "excellence, integrity, and community." Bernhardt and Reyes (2016) find that reactions to campus protests and student engagement serve as catalysts for change.

The Association for American Colleges and Universities (AACU) has considered equity, diversity, inclusion, and access as its four principal tenants of campus climate efforts, while the need for universities to consider biases and microaggressions (American Civil Liberties Union, n.d.). Museus (2008) adds to this by incorporating the campus culture when considering campus climate analysis, an idea which is heavily reinforced (Cuyjet, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2014; Harper, 2015; Hill, 2009; Mayhew & Bryan, 2012; Strange & Banning 2001).

Campus climate evaluation has been used to study the environments of institutions in term of multiculturalism and race, on LGBTQIA identities, for students of color, and in international student involvements (Doan, 2011; Kuh, 2000). Rankin's (2003) national study for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force serves as a seminal document for consideration of LGBTQIA identities and campus climate. Recently, studies have begun to evaluate the campus

climate including aspects of religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion (see especially Bryant Rockenbach & Mayhew 2014).

Unfortunately, incidents on college campuses related to issues of Islamaphobia and antisemitism can be attributed to the rise in awareness and studies related to religious inclusion in the campus climate (Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2013). The rise in incidents on college campuses in the last few years, somewhat spurred on by the election of Donald Trump to the U.S. Presidency (American Civil Liberties Union, 2016), were taken into seriously consideration in this study. In 2015, a Jewish student leader at UCLA was openly discriminated against for being Jewish, opening the door to a discussion of compliance by the institution of ignoring warning signs related to marginalized religious identity exclusion (Mokhtarzadeh, 2015). As well, a recent set of incidents at the University of Michigan, in which two separate faculty refused to write letters of recommendations for Jewish-identifying students, has shed light on biases held within higher education in general (Stanley-Becker, 2018).

The current study went deeper into these concerns and utilized previous studies as guides. The study pivoted research methods as a pathway to focus more thoroughly on religious, secular, and spiritual identities using understanding of the physical environments and campus policies and practices governed by the Office of Spiritual and Ethical development. Hurtado's (1998) framework, while shown through numerous inquiries to be an effective use of the student experience examination, falls short of this study's approach of utilizing the physical spaces and campus policies and practices as the unit of analysis. Strange and Banning's (2001) work, specifically designed to consider the environment of the institution through its structures, offered a wider lens into the proposed case study, an analysis of Penn State's Pasquerilla Center and its overseer unit, the Office for Spiritual and Ethical Development.

Beginning in the early 2000s, Hurtado's framework was used in well-established studies of spiritual dimensions of student experience, including the UCLA Study of Spirituality and Higher Education (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011), the Campus Religious and Spiritual Climate Survey, (Mayhew, Bowman, & Bryant Rockenbach, 2014; Mayhew & Bryant Rockenbach, 2012; Bryant Rockenbach, & Mayhew, 2013, 2014; Rockenbach et al., 2015), and the Interfaith Diversity Experiences and Attitudes Longitudinal Study (Mayhew, Hoggan, Rockenbach & Lo 2016; Rockenbach, Riggers-Piehl, Garvey, Lo, & Mayhew, 2015). Each of these studies has been pivotal to the growing field of campus climate research, and yet lacks the institutional understanding attempted to be considered in this study itself related to campus climate. To understand these origins and the current scope of study, we now turn the specific studies in religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

Spirituality in Higher Education Research: Beginnings

Response to the need to support the religious, secular, and spiritual identities of students on college campuses has been largely mixed. While current changes and studies are highlighting this need, a seminal moment in the late 1990s is often considered to be the catalyst for a dramatic shift in the landscape. The Education as Transformation conference, the first major conference in U.S. history ever bringing together professionals to discuss religion on campus, took place on the campus of Wellesley College September 22 and 23, 1998 (Kazanjian & Laurence., 2000). Attended by over 800 professionals brought together by a team of professionals including Peter Laurence (founder of Education as Transformation and visionary in the field of interfaith work in the United States), Victor Kazanjian (then Chaplain at Wellesley), Diana Chapman Walsh (then President of Wellesley), Janet Cooper Nelson (then and still chaplain at Brown University), and others, the conference was a sizable gathering that included many notable professionals.. This

significant gathering surprised most participants who often were overheard saying “We had no idea so many people were interested in this work,” (Laurence, 1999).

The discussion at the gathering centered around four questions related to how the university can or should integrate religious, secular, and spiritual identities into the diversity of the campus (Laurence, 1999). The conclusions from the gathering framed the future of the work.

“Spirituality in education...has to do with going beyond the acquisition of knowledge and entering the realms of meaning and purpose,” (Laurence, 1999). Based on experiences of the participants, “students who develop a sense of pluralism during (their time in higher education) can later play a key role in the building of a more stable and inclusive civil society,” (Laurence, 1999, pp. 15-16).

Soon after the gathering, Love and Talbot (1999) would argue there existed a “missing piece” of higher education’s efforts of support its students (Love & Talbot, 1999, p. 361). Jon Dalton, building upon the success of Education as Transformation and the first few years of the Dalton Institute College Student Values Conference, launched the *Journal of College and Character* in 2000 (Nielsen & Small, 2019). These, the first of many initiatives begun by higher educators in the last twenty years to support spirituality on campus, began a long road that brings us to today’s current literature.

UCLA Study and Subsequent Research

No understanding of religious, secular, and spiritual identities in higher education can be complete without understanding its foundations. Two researchers, Alexander Astin and Helen Astin, prominent scholars from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), pioneered the field of research with a six-year study beginning in the fall of 2003. The study itself is the most cited research in the up and coming field of religious and spiritual identities in higher

education and has been used as a cornerstone of literature reviews for every principal study since its inception. Researchers who were part of the team, including graduate students until the tutelage of Dr. Alexander (Sandy) Astin, have gone on to produce some of the most important current research (see the work of Rockenbach, Lindholm, and others). Astin frames the study with an essay stating a need to study “the interior lives of students” (Astin, 2004, p.11). The study focused its efforts on a greater understanding of the impact spirituality has upon the experience of the modern-day college students (Astin, 2004). “We are encouraging our students to look at their education in a more holistic way, and to make deeper connections between their academic work and their sense of meaning and purpose in life,” (Astin, 2004 p. 17). The pilot study studied 3,700 students at 46 colleges and universities, setting the stage for the full-scale assessment beginning in the fall of 2004, which includes over 112,000 students enrolled at 236 institutions (Astin, 2004).

The Astins’ study found that “80 percent of participants reported having an interest in ‘spirituality’” (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, p.4). Of the students who scored high on these measures, 90 percent believed that it was “essential or “very important” for their campuses to enhance their self-understanding, with 73 percent responding that campuses should encourage spiritual expression in and throughout their experience (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011). Spiritual struggle is a typical experience in the lives of students. This struggle, defined by Bryant and Astin (2008), includes “intrapsychic concerns about matters of faith, purpose, and meaning in life” (p.1). Twenty-one percent of students responded with “frequently” when asked about struggling with evil, suffering, and death (p.2). Another 18 percent “frequently” questioned their religious/spiritual beliefs (p.12). Bryant and Astin (year) find several factors including: (a) belonging to a non-dominant religion, (b) being female, (c) attending a religious college, (d)

majoring in psychology, and having “experiences in college that challenge, disorient, and introduce students to new and unfamiliar worldviews,” (p.20) and (e) studying engineering (p.32) all correlating with increased spiritual struggle. These issues of spiritual struggle in turn translate to psychological and physical health concerns, including higher rates of anxiety related disorder as well as depression (p.16). Religious minorities are thus struggling in significant ways during college.

Five measures of spirituality throughout the study (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm 2011) measure internal (spiritual quest & equanimity) and external (ethic of caring, charitable involvement, and ecumenical worldview) aspects of participants. Spiritual quest, or the “seeking” in us that can lead to better understand of who we are, why we are here, and how we can live a meaningful life (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011) became a pivotal part of the study’s results. Interactions with others as well as support from faculty and administration led to increased spiritual quest amongst students. While spiritual quest is not about commitment to particular faith traditions, students’ spiritual quest “increased each of the first three years of their undergraduate experience” (Astin, Astin & Lindholm, 2011). Even students who were discouraged from engaging in spiritual quest saw increased engagement.

The key findings in caring for and about others were well founded in the study itself. “Charitable Involvement,” such a community service and civic engagement, are found to be higher amongst those practicing spirituality during undergraduate education. Utilizing an ethic of caring scale, Astin, Astin, and Lindholm (2011), found significant increases over the years for students who are involved in religious communities. Hindi, Buddhist, Muslim, and Eastern Orthodox students demonstrate high charitable involvement early in college. While Buddhists

and Orthodox students demonstrate declines in charitable involvement over time, Hindu students demonstrated significant increases during their college experience in charitable giving.

Two attitudinal measures were added to the 2007 follow-up survey (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011). The “ability to get along with people of different races and cultures” and “helping to promote racial understanding” measures showed that students engaged with spirituality demonstrate significant increase in growing a “global citizenship narrative” (p. 125). On the contrary, students who identify with any particular religious identity show low promotion of racial understanding, potentially because a tendency exists for many religious communities to be homogeneous. This finding helps to illustrate the divergence between individuals who identify as spiritual versus those who are religious. Alongside this, “ecumenical involvement,” looks at the extent to which the student is interested in different religious traditions, seeks to understand other countries and cultures, feels a strong connection to all humanity, believes in the goodness of all people, accepts others as they are, and believes that all life is interconnected, and that love is at the root of all the great religions (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011).

While the study, and dozens of ensuing studies (Ahmadi & Cole, 2014; Bryant Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2014; Small & Bowman, 2012; Seifert & Holman-Harmon, 2009), demonstrate the need for inclusion of religious, secular, and spiritual identities, students with minority worldviews often do not view colleges and universities as welcoming places for these beliefs (Bryant Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2013). Negative sentiments regarding religious traditions, especially minority religious traditions, remain prevalent on campuses (Ingraham, 2015). Students oftentimes refrain from participating in programming and other exchanges across traditions (Goodman & Mueller, 2009). This perpetuates the marginalization of religious minorities by upholding a dominant Christian narrative of American culture (Bowman & Small,

2012b; Seifert & Holman-Harmon, 2009) and creates a cycle in which programming is dominated only by majority voices and deepens divides within the religious, secular, and spiritual communities on campuses.

Efforts over the past twenty years have largely focused on normalizing the exchanges of individuals across religious and non-religious traditions through an active focus on student interfaith dialogue (IFYC, n.d.) These efforts have sought in part to improve the American cultural climate. As Patel (2007), founder of the Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) states, “I believe America can prevent those tensions from taking root here. But I think we have to be far more intentional about nurturing the alternative to interreligious conflict. This means that we have to take religious diversity seriously, and engage interreligious engagement in a very intentional way” (p. 37). It is at this level of engagement that much of the previous data has focused.

The IDEALS Study

Rockenbach, Mayhew, and Bowman (2015) establish a significant strand of research through the IDEALS study, seeking to triangulate campus climate as an interdependent experience of the student appreciate attitudes toward one another (see Bowman, Rockenbach, Mayhew, Riggers- Piehl, & Hudson, 2017; Mayhew, Bowman, Rockenbach, Selzick, & Riggers- Piehl, 2018; Mayhew, Hoggan, Rockenbach, & Lo, 2016;). The study was conducted as a follow up to the UCLA study and due to the needs to have a second study with a more recent generation of students (Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman, 2015). The study finds various degrees of appreciative attitudes depending on each tradition, with the generalization emerging that higher appreciative attitudes are being found amongst Muslim populations than in previous studies (see Ahmadi & Cole, 2014; Astin, Astin, & Lindholm 2011) but also that appreciative attitudes from

marginalized communities toward Evangelical Christians (and *vice versa*) are especially challenging, leading both groups to feel marginalized (Mayhew et al., 2018; Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman 2015). Students with non-religious identities also find themselves marginalized through the attitudes of students from Evangelical traditions (Bowman et al., 2017).

There remains a question of the environment (Kuh, 2000) to be considered. Walker, Hathcoat, and Mace (2015) find discrepancies between student and institutional worldviews which demonstrate this concern within the literature. The campus environments that may have dissonance toward certain religious, secular, and spiritual identities are found to be even more determinant of student experience than previously catalogued (Walker, Hathcoat, & Mace, 2015). Students who come from traditions which are different than the institutions in which they attend (i.e. Muslims at an Evangelical Christian school) find that the discrepancies lead to feelings of dissatisfaction and estrangement from the campus community (Walker, Hathcoat, & Mace, 2015). To get to this issue, a different methodology must be employed to consider the environment from a more holistic and institutional focus. The following looks at a different theoretical framework, that of Strange and Banning (2001).

Campus Climate through Strange and Banning's Framework

The study made use of Strange and Banning's (2001) *Educating by Design* theoretical framework to evaluate Pasquerilla Center as a way to evaluate the campus climate. Strange and Banning's environmental factors include: organizational, aggregate, physical, and constructed environments, and offer an opportunity to look at the conditions of the institution itself which drive the religious, secular, and spiritual experiences on campus. The Pasquerilla Center as the principal unit of analysis within the study was designed to understand how the institution values

and supports religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion through physical spaces and through its policies and practices. Moos (1986), a pioneer in the environmental design field, speaks of these designs as methods through which a university maximizes their intended goals.

The framework begins by examining how the Physical Environments of the campus respond to the intended messages the university wishes to convey (Strange & Banning, 2001). This framework focuses on understanding the connections between determinism (the architectural expectation that the built environment is directly linked to the behavior which takes place within it), possibilism (the ability for an environment to provide a certain set of behaviors within it), and probabilism (the likely outcomes of behavior based on the physical environments). Additionally, Strange and Banning (2001) consider messaging as a form of physical environment, such as a welcome sign on a college admissions sign. Evaluation of how these physical environments are built include understanding the intended outcomes of the institution in comparison to what the Physical Environments produce. If the university expects to produce a holistically inclusive environment for religious, secular, and spiritual identities, its spaces will reflect the needs of a broad selection of religious and non-religious identities.

The second area of inquiry is the Aggregate Environment, used by Strange and Banning (2001), but best summarized by Holland (1973) illustrates that “environments are transmitted by people...the dominant features of the environment are a function of the collective characteristics of the individuals who inhabit it” (p. 73). This area of inquiry suggests that there is a level of welcoming and inclusion for individuals who are part of the same identity (Strange & Banning, 2001). For example, a university which has a strong business school is more likely to see students who are socially enterprising by nature as connected with the business school environment, while artistic students would connect to the theatre and liberal arts areas of the

campus. Focused on what Strange and Banning describe as “person-environment congruence” (p.53) students who are part of the majority of the campus are more likely to feel welcomed than those who are dissimilar. Part of the inquiry will evaluate how the bounded case has a differentiated or undifferentiated environment, a measurement of how many types of individuals can find a welcoming environment in which to connect based on the current makeup of the campus.

The study of Organizational Environments, the third area of inquiry, sought to understand the use of everything from power, influence, divisions of labor, communication, production, efficiency, centralization and stratification (Strange & Banning, 2001). Organizational environments and how they are designed are an illustration of the values of units, individuals, and entire systems within the institution. The current study evaluated the Office for Spiritual and Ethical Development at Penn State (CFSED) through this framework, considering how its placement within the office for student affairs was or was not able to create and uphold institutional policies and practices.

The final area of consideration, constructed environments, offers a landscape of the “mediated and subjective perceptions and experiences” of individuals within the environment (Strange & Banning, 2001, p. 85-86). Unlike the previous three areas within the framework, this fourth area is directly tied to experiences and the differing perspectives of those who are present on the campus. Because of the use of the constructivism lens in this study, individual perspectives were upheld within the data. Thus, the campus culture, one of the principal areas within this area of consideration (Strange and Banning, 2001) may be present internally in different ways depending on which religious, secular, and spiritual population’s answers are considered.

The constructed, physical, aggregate, and organizational environments offer an important way to evaluate student experiences, crafting new narratives that are missing in the literature, but that can be discovered using this mode of inquiry.

Connecting the Proposed Research Questions with Theoretical Framework

As previously outlined, the study sought to answer three fundamental questions related to the campus climate of Penn State University:

1. How does a physical environment such as the Pasquerilla Center support the religious, secular, and spiritual diversity of the campus environment?
2. What role might a multifaith center play in the campus climate of the institution?
3. How does the campus climate affect the experiences among religious, secular, and spiritually affiliated students connected to the Pasquerilla Center?

In using Strange and Banning's theoretical framework, the question of understanding the physical environment of the Pasquerilla Multifaith Center can be answered using the physical environment framework. Strange and Banning provide examples of how physical space design is a reflection (or not) of mission and vision. Using document reviews of the mission and vision of the Pasquerilla Center in conjunction with observation and focus groups with students, the study compared if the spaces within the center facilitated the mission and vision of the center and support an inclusive campus climate.

In evaluating the role of the Pasquerilla Center's affect upon campus climate, the use of the constructive environment framework provided the method to analyze how students might or might not feel as though they belong and are welcome. Using the framework, the question of culture was explored in focus groups and individual interviews with students, with questions

focused on whether students perceive Penn State as a place wherein it is safe to practice their religious, secular, or spiritual identity. Furthermore, these interviews included consideration of how students perceive the culture of the campus's attitudes towards religious, secular, and spiritual identities. They were then analyzed to determine the constructive and perceived culture of the campus.

In addition, the organizational framework helped to uncover the pathways through which the Multifaith office is able to implement policies and practices that can affect the campus climate. Through document review of the student affairs organizational chart, as well as through interviews with staff and administration, data was analyzed as to how the Center was able to implement policies that affect the campus climate. The study considered how and if the Center was able to contribute effectively to the campus climate through these policies or if the structure prevented this kind of growth.

The final proposed question understanding the campus climate in relationship to the student experiences of religious, secular, and spiritual identities was understood through the Strange and Banning's aggregate as well as constructed environmental frameworks. Using the aggregate framework, interviews and focus groups, as well as observation data was analyzed to determine which religious, secular, and spiritual identities on campus perceived themselves to be among the marginalized on campus. These beliefs differed between religious, secular, and spiritual identities, and nuances emerged demonstrating that many religious, secular, and spiritual identities perceive marginalization in specific ways. Secondly, the use of the constructed environmental framework sought to provide information as to whether the student experience may be a question of emerging culture on campus. For example, should the presence of a large Muslim population on campus permit Muslim-identifying individuals to perceive themselves in

the dominant and welcomed culture on campus, they may perceive that the campus culture itself is in support of the Muslim community. In comparison, even if the Evangelical Christian students on campus may perceive themselves to be included within the majority aggregate environment, they may potentially perceive minority status based on a culture of hostility as it pertains to their religious identity. The following diagram seeks to help visualize this system of approach study.

Table 2 <i>Study Questions</i>	
Physical Environments	How does a physical environment such as the Pasquerilla Center support religious, secular, and spiritual diversity of the campus environment?
Aggregate Environments	What role might a multifaith center play in the campus climate of the institution? How does the campus climate affect the experiences among religious, secular, and spiritually affiliated students connected to the Pasquerilla Center?
Organizational Environments	What role might a Multifaith center play in the campus climate of the institution?
Constructed Environment	What role might a Multifaith center play in the campus climate of the institution? How does the campus climate affect the experiences among religious, secular, and spiritually affiliated students connected to the Pasquerilla Center?

Bringing It All Together

From its origins in the Education as Transformation Conference of 1998, to the major studies (UCLA study and IDEALS), religious, secular, and spiritual identities have quickly become a significant area of inquiry within higher education literature. While still significantly

smaller in scope than other areas of study, this area of religious, secular, and spiritual identities presents an emergent field of research for practitioners to consider. The current scope of the literature mostly tied to Hurtado et al.'s (1998) five dimensions of campus climate, provides ample student experience data and analysis, but lacks inquiries which place the institution as the unit of analysis. Utilizing Strange and Banning's *Educating by Design* framework, this study presents a strategy which provides new methods of inquiry with a single institution. Drawing upon the current literature, the current study proposed that affecting the student experiences are a number of environmental conditions, especially those of the physical space of the Pasquerilla Center, and the institutional policies and practices that are driven by the Office for Spiritual and Ethical Development. By studying these, we can glimpse in the campus climate of one institution seeking to support all forms of religious, secular, and spiritual identity

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

College students in the United States are more diverse than ever before (Eagan, et.al., 2014). A growing representation of religious, secular, and spiritual beliefs outside of Christian traditions is becoming the norm in the American landscape (PRC, 2015). A university which seeks to model global citizenship with its student population benefits from creating a climate of inclusion for all forms of religious, secular, and spiritual identities (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2008).

The case study examined the Pasquerilla Multifaith Center at Pennsylvania (Penn) State University, a 4-year public university in State College, Pennsylvania. The study sought to evaluate the multifaith center's physical spaces and its operating unit, the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development. Qualitative case study methodology allowed for exploring these issues using what Strange and Banning (2001) describe as physical environments, human aggregates, organizational environments, and constructed environments in order to evaluate the campus climate for religious, secular, and spiritual identities. Through the use of observation, document review, and interviews with students and university personnel, this focused and bounded case study of one public 4-year institution highlighted how public universities, which are often places of tension related to religious, secular, and spiritual identity, may instead become environments of profound transformation and openness to religious and spiritual inclusion. The study highlighted how one such university is designing a framework that could be considered for other universities. The specific questions guiding the research were:

1. How does a physical environment such as the Pasquerilla Multifaith Center support religious, secular, and spiritual diversity of the campus environment?
2. What role might a Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development play in the campus climate of the institution?

3. How does the campus climate affect the experiences among religious, secular, and spiritually affiliated students connected to the Pasquerilla Center?

Studying institutional climate required in-depth research looking at multiple factors and utilizing multiple methods of inquiry. Because the study is designed to consider the Pasquerilla Center and its influence on the campus climate, a qualitative exploratory case study approach was being chosen as the appropriate strategy for inquiry based on recognized scholarship in the field. Using constructivism as methodology, the study was shaped and reframed throughout the study as I and the participants interacted with the questions, as findings provided a lens through which to deepen and enhance the results. As I considered the Pasquerilla Center's physical environment, it was important to begin by identifying underlying assumptions and a deeper understanding of how "truth" might be determined from such an inquiry.

Social Constructivism and the Question of Truth

An understanding of religious, secular, and spiritual beliefs requires a stepping back to consider truth claims being made by any one community and valuing the nuances which are inevitable in such a study. Social constructivism, a framework through which to understand reality, attempts to define "truth" as a reflection of individual observations of the world (Pascale, 2010). Based in sociology, constructivism allows for individuals to hold "knowledge and meaning which are conditional and perspectival" (Pascale, 2010, p. 50). The framework permits changes as "human beings interact with their world and their social context" (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). Because of the proposed study's focus on the institutional environment manifested by physical spaces present on Penn State's campus, as well as the institutional climate which is partially supported by institutional policies and practices, social constructivism served as a useful

tool in understanding the experiences of those who identify as religious, secular, and spiritual on Penn State's campus.

Schwandt (2003) illustrates that social constructivists view knowledge and truth as created and not discovered, particularly through members of the group working/creating together as a group, potentially including with the researcher or facilitator. In contradiction to positivists, those who are social constructivists are able to hold in tension that truth is both an experience of the individual and also fluid between individuals. In a study considering multiple religious and non-religious identities, beliefs by different individuals and communities needed to be held in tension. Thus social constructivist lenses allowed for greater and more accurate analysis of experiences in this study. And as it is the student *experience* I sought to best understand, this qualitative mode of research was best suited to the project.

Steedman (2000) notes that most of what is known by social constructivists is in relation to their understanding of how to make sense of the world. Many religious communities feel marginalized in America. This includes traditions one might expect such as Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, or Sikh identifying individuals (PRC, 2015), but Evangelical Christians as well have expressed feelings of marginalization more recently (Moran, Lang, & Oliver, 2007). Giving permission for students from these communities to express their feelings of marginalization by the institutional climate both individually and in focus group interviews allowed for exploration of the social construction of the campus and may offer insights into issues of group think which may be present in the campus environment.

Social constructivists understand that there will always be biases held by the researcher. There remains an epistemological reality that as the founder of an organization related to institutional policy related to religious, secular, and spiritual identities, I held an assumed bias

that Penn State's methods for the university are effective. Choosing the university itself as the bounded case study revealed my bias as researcher, especially because of my previous research which included Penn State as an institution. While social constructivism gives permission for biases, one must work to reduce these within study. To offer a robust analysis, efforts were made to overcome biases and to maintain credibility in my approaching the research in narrative form, utilizing interviews and extending coding, and especially the inclusion of quotes from the study participants built into the results section of the research. Additionally, the research included peer-reviewed checks between participants to gain comprehensive understanding of interactions between students and institutional policies and practices as well as the use of physical spaces.

In reflecting ontologically upon this study, Pasque, Carducci, Kuntz, and Gildersleeve (2012) argue that many, including those within the social constructivist paradigm, seek to focus on unmasking the dualistic mind and body perspective. For them, constructivism must allow for the nature of reality to always be fluid and unrestrained (Pasque et al., 2012). In this way, each individual experience is considered equal and valid, and while perspectives may not always align and agree with one another, they can be considered worthy. This is especially important in religious, secular, and spiritual identity work, where it is easy to become biased regarding who should and should not feel more marginalized. The campus climate evaluation within this study then became not just a question of quantitative facts, but one of integration of attitudes between individuals and their environments that can only be measured in qualitative narrative form.

Positionality and Subjectivity

Evaluating the information being sought to be completed without bias. I am an ordained United Methodist clergy person who identifies as agnostic. Throughout my life, I have found meaning in spirituality as a framing narrative of my identity as well as found it to be important in

the lives of others. When I left seminary in 2011, I entered into the University of Minnesota community as the director of United Methodist campus ministry. It was in this environment, one in which is rich with religious, secular, and spiritual diversity, where my story of exploring systems of higher education begins.

Fully expecting to find a campus welcoming religious diversity, I instead found a campus devoid of even basic accommodations to support those religious identities outside of my own. Jewish and Muslim students without Kosher and Halal options on campus, almost no consideration of the needs for prayer and reflection spaces for Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu students, for the needs of any students seeking a space for reflection, and for the over seventy religiously affiliated student groups, most of which identified as parachurch evangelical Christian. This environment made me aware of the need for institutions of higher education to take more seriously the campus climate that affects these religious minorities.

Today, my theological upbringing, one that began in Catholicism until high school, was prominently Protestant in college and for the first five years beyond, including through my Master of Divinity degree in Washington, D.C. I have always valued public higher education, a bias which has led me to explore more deeply how four-year public institutions, specifically the one included in this bounded case, which is supporting over 40,000 students in their religious, secular, and spiritual identities. To this end, I now would argue that I am more strongly in support of marginalized religious identities than I am of my own Christian identity.

My assumption that public higher education should deepen its relationship with religious, secular, and spiritual diversity is a prominent part of my positionality, as it frames the passion I brought to this project, but it also creates a paradigm that the policies and practices that are implemented at Penn State University are a lens through which we can interpret the religious,

secular, and spiritual climate of a wider higher education environment. Additionally, I previously worked for the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) as their Expert in Residence for Religious, Secular, and Spiritual Identities, focusing my efforts on providing resources for professionals related to religious inclusion. Furthermore, in 2017, I launched Convergence on Campus, the first North American based organization dedicated to religious, secular, and spiritual equity efforts through policy and practice.

All of these experiences contribute to my bias that higher education need take more seriously the climate of their campuses for marginalized religious identities.

Overall, my position leads me to believe that the inclusion of religious, secular, and spiritual identity is important in higher education and in our world at large. This lens obviously informs both why I completed this study but also what values I place on the work, including how I see this area of diversity in higher education as influencing the outcomes I hoped the study would reveal. By understanding my positionality and building in ways in which to neutralize it in the research, a more factual set of outcomes emerged that determine whether any of the conditions of campus climate being considered affect the campus and its diversity.

As researcher, I am informed by previous experiences that lead toward bias. These biases were most apparent in assumptions that Evangelical Christianity is problematic in the field of religious, secular, and spiritual identities due to its overt use of proselytizing as a method of practice. Many times in my work, these evangelical groups have sought to subvert the efforts of those working toward campus inclusion by instead harassing other religious community members, a challenging obstacle to overcome. By standardizing the questions that are asked within the focus groups, as well as doing member-checking with participants before compiling results, I sought to limit biases. Based on numerous case studies I personally completed but have

yet to be published, evangelicals are rarely involved in supporting moves toward a level of equity for religious minorities because their numbers are significant in comparison in size to the Muslim Student Association, Hillel (the Jewish organization) and other marginalized student groups. This can be seen on many large public universities in the south in which evangelical groups are large and prominent on campus.

Additionally, bias exists regarding my belief that certain policies and practices are more important to highlight than others. On campuses where administrations have supported a controversial social movement known as BDS, or the boycotting, divesting, and sanctioning of Israeli supporting companies and their products as it relates to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I have found significant challenges in supporting Jewish student organizations like Hillel International. While I support the voices of those who are pro-Palestinian, who tend to be from the Islamic tradition, I remain biased against the use of BDS on the campus.

Specifically with Penn State, there is a level of bias that begins with the selection process. Throughout my research process for the study (Nielsen & Small, 2019) which was completed a few years ago, Penn State was a benchmark institution through which I began to evaluate other institutions. Deep connections with the staff and the context of the Office and spaces are part of the reason this university is being chosen. To account for this, as a researcher it is important to note my positionality and personal belief that this setting is one of the most significant in the field of higher education as it pertains to religious, secular, and spiritual identities due to its influence it has had not only upon my research, but upon the ways in which other universities have modeled their centers from inquiries of Penn State's Pasquerilla Center.

Because bias exists from the researcher, and because much of current scholarship has revolved around understanding the appreciative attitudes between students, the current

scholarship attempted to tell the whole story of one institution without reservation or redaction. Individual interviews with students and staff were told with specific emphasis upon valuing all identities and individuals included in the study, and a comprehensive analysis produced mixed results as to who felt supported within the campus climate.

Case Study Methodology

Case study provided an ideal architecture for qualitative inquiries, as it looks to consider an issue or a problem using one more “cases” within a bounded system (i.e. bounded by time or place and in the case of this study, physical environment.) (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 1998). The Pasquerilla Center represented the unit of analysis for the current study, with the study’s results being informed by a multi-modal method of data sources, including student and administrative voices gathered through interviews and focus groups, document review, and observations of student engagement with the physical spaces of the Spiritual Center. This case study focused on attempting to understand how the university’s systems provide an environment that welcome religious, secular, and spiritual identities. Penn State as an institution could easily be said to be one of the most exceptional universities in the United States working on religious, secular, and spiritual identities, as the Center as well as the CFSED are often referred to by many scholars and practioners (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2008). The use of Strange and Banning’s (2001) framework was a way to expand previous research, which also utilizes Hurtado & colleagues’ (1998) five dimensions of climate (e.g. Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011; Mayhew, Bowman, and Bryant Rockenbach, 2014) almost exclusively in analysis.

Case study research involved data collection from multiple sources including observations, interviews, and document review (Creswell, 2013 pp. 73-74). As Yin (1993) states,

case study is an “all-encompassing” method of inquiry (p. 34). Case study methodology’s utilization of multiple forms of data will allow for a research study which provides a variety of perspectives. Due to the multiple realities taking place within the institution from students, staff, and from the institutional policies and practices themselves, multiple lenses were necessary to provide a comprehensive view of the campus climate of the institution.

Use of Exploratory Case Study Method

Similar research from previous studies (Park, 2014; Edwards, 2016) demonstrated the opportunity to use case study. Yin (1994) highlights that exploratory case study can be used well to explore “how” and “why” questions. Exploratory studies may also be used to pilot future studies and to offer research framework for future study (Yin, 1994). A study of this sort sought to understand the ways in which organizations create and implement innovative ideas into their systems (Yin, 1994).

Exploratory case study was used as well when there was absence of preliminary research in the field (Yin, 1994). In the case of religious, secular, and spiritual identities in higher education, while previous research focuses its efforts upon the student experience, exploring the Pasquerilla Center as an aspect of campus climate through a physical environment lens of Strange and Banning’s (2001) *Educating by Design* framework expands the current literature. Because the study is a single site case study, the results sought to enhance future research including the possibility for multiple case study designs.

Penn State as Bounded System

The flagship institution of the Pennsylvania State system, Penn State (State College), represented an important institution in American higher education when considering religious, secular, and spiritual diversity. A land grant public institution founded in 1855, Penn State

University is home to the Pasquerilla Spiritual Center, a 60,000 square foot center opened in the fall of 2003 which houses the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development, a unit of the Office for Student Affairs (Penn State, n.d.). Penn State has been at the forefront of religious, secular, and spiritual identities work for much of the last 60 years and represents an exceptional case of a public university addresses these issues (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). Furthermore, Penn State is well resourced in that its office has seven full time staff. The office itself is staffed by higher education professionals who host programming across religious traditions as well as maintain the physical environment of the Pasquerilla Spiritual Center. The center is the largest “multifaith” center of its kind in the United States (Penn State, n.d.) and “offers a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment aimed to promote an environment of appreciation and respect for religious and spiritual diversity” (Penn State, n.d.).

The center’s creation includes over a dozen multipurpose spaces available for reservation by students, a worship space that can hold up to 750 persons at any one time and enough office space for over fifty religious groups to have shared office space for activities and general office management. Catholic and Jewish traditions, under the names The Newman Center and Penn State Hillel, have larger office spaces in the building and Penn State Hillel’s Torah is housed within the building. These larger and specialized spaces were negotiated during the architectural design phase of the building and were due to each organization financially supporting the building fund.

Religious, secular, and spiritual diversity is often studied exclusively through the lens of student experience. Hundreds of studies, including the Spirituality and Higher Education study at UCLA (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011) and the [currently in process] Interfaith Diversity Experiences and Attitudes Longitudinal Study (IDEALS) focus their efforts mostly in examining

the student experience. Only recently has campus climate become an area of inquiry for higher education research as it pertains to religious, secular, and spiritual identity (see Rockenbach, Mayhew, & Bowman, 2015).

Considering Penn State as the bounded system, examining the Pasquerilla Multifaith Center is an appropriate way to study how religious, secular, and spiritual identities are supported within the campus climate. The Study of the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development as well as the ways in which the physical environment of the Pasquerilla Center influences the religious, secular, and spiritual diversity of the campus population represents leading edge research in the field. Penn State represents in many ways the seminal expression of campus climate analysis for religious, secular, and spiritual identities. The study, in its examination of the physical spaces, campus policies and practices created and upheld by the Office for Spiritual and Ethical Development, and its experiences by students and staff alike, creates an opportunity to focus on to use a narrative approach within the case study.

As the university which is home to the largest multifaith center in the North America (Penn State, n.d.), as well as a public university, Penn State represents a model through which to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives universities might consider. Completion of this study offered a chance to understand the phenomenon of campus climate at an institution. Penn State shows a demonstrable campus climate inclusive of these identities and has in many ways proven that the opportunity is both possible and imperative.

Penn State's robust research into its campus diversity and demographics of its students, including their religious, secular, and spiritual identities, showed the reasons for this study. Penn State appeared to have increased its diversity numbers of the past several years at greater rates than the general population of higher education, as their Muslim population has more than tripled

since the center opened in 2003, as well as saw increases dramatically in many other marginalized student groups (Penn State, n.d.).

Additionally, 15 years after its creation, and with an expansion of space on the way, Penn State's Pasquerilla Center has solidified itself a presence at Penn State. The Center has withstood dozens of legal inquiries, including questions of whether the CFSED can legally be funded by the university as well as whether the entire center is promoting a specific religious tradition. The Center continues to refine any procedures but has always been able to remain within the legal bounds.

Data Collection

Review of Data Sources

This case study drew from three extensive sources of information in order to understand the Pasquerilla Center at Penn State University. First, document review provided details of the policies and practices the Office for Spiritual and Ethical Development have been able to implement as well as the original documentation of the creation of the physical spaces Penn State offers to support religious, secular, and spiritual identity. Secondly, observation of use of the physical spaces within the Pasquerilla Center offered insight to how students and staff interact, how the spaces promote religious, secular, and spiritual identities and fostered an environment which is inclusive of these identities. The study concluded with staff and student focus groups and individual interviews to evaluate and understand the perceptions of individuals who utilized the Pasquerilla Center. Combined, these three methods and the extensive data collected from each method offered a comprehensive understanding of the Pasquerilla Center and its effect upon the campus climate in support of religious, secular, and spiritual identities, answering the questions within this case study. Each question in the study required extensive review of multiple

sources, including document review and observation. Table 3 outlines the sources used to answer each of the three research questions.

Table 3 <i>Research Questions and the Sources for Inquiry</i>					
<i>Questions and Sources</i>	<i>Staff Interviews N=12</i>	<i>Document Review</i>	<i>Focus Groups N=5</i>	<i>Student Interviews N=4</i>	<i>Observation</i>
<i>How does a physical environment such as a “multifaith” center support religious, secular, and spiritual diversity of the campus environment?</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>
<i>What role does a Multifaith office and center play in the campus climate of the institution?</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	
<i>What are the experiences of religiously affiliated students at an institution which has created a center and a physical environment for religious, secular, and spiritual identity?</i>			<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>

Gatekeepers, Key Informants, and Rapport Building

Creating and preserving relationships with key individuals who can help the researcher gain access to other participants is essential in case study approach. These “gatekeepers” (Maxwell, 2014; Pasque, Carducci, Kuntz, & Gildersleeve, 2012), helped build a participant list and supported rapport building for the study. Previous relationships by the researcher provided

easier accessibility to individuals, as well as specifics necessary to the study. This previously established rapport was extremely useful in the first step in the research, document review. My previous contacts as well as a presence on campus helped me with rapport building (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014, p. 120). My goal was to be invited by certain gatekeepers, like those within the Office for Student Affairs, to be engaged in the research, offering insights as they are identified for future enhancement of current institutional policies and practices. For other participants, which included other staff and campus ministers, who were the gatekeepers of the student participants, my goal was to convey as much information regarding the study as was ethical to them through individual interaction as well as an informal meeting, as arranged with the support of the Director of the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development.

Document Review

Document review focused on two specific areas of inquiry: (a) the physical layout and dimensions of the multifaith center and, (b) any documents related to policies and practices the university currently has on record which support religious, secular, and spiritual identities of students. To determine what materials to include, I used what Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) refer to as “outside in” observations. Gaining insights during interviews with staff, documents were selected which relate to the physical environments of the multifaith center as well as institutional policies which have been implemented by the university related to religious, secular, and identities. Material for this came from the student handbook, Penn State University’s strategic plan, material from the Office for Equal Opportunity, the Office for Equity and Diversity, and other relevant locations. In the case of documents pertaining to physical space dimensions, inquiry was made with university archives and with the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development. If not available in the archives, a formal request was made to the Office of

the Vice President for Student Affairs for access to information. Previous rapport was helpful and recursive analysis of data from the initial staff interviews provided rationale for access.

The scope of the review of documents is highlighted in Appendix A, focusing on understanding the physical space layouts and how said spaces were utilized as well as reviewing the timeline of policies and practices in reference to other concerns or situations the university was addressing as a way to build a narrative from what began in the early 2000s to present.

Observation

Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) speak to observation as an opportunity for “outside in” approaches in which the researcher documents from an outside perspective the environment before becoming fully acclimated. With information about the physical spaces, as well as the institutional policies and practices in hand, observation sought to understand the phenomenon of how the spaces are being used and the policies upheld and support to the environment. To fulfill this expectation required extensive visits to the center over a period of two months to observe student interactions. Observations took place throughout the center’s spaces with at least two observations in each of the around 15 spaces. I observed for nearly 50 hours over two and a half weeks during the months of April and May 2019. Observations included any and all visitors to the spaces within the center, which may include staff, students, and faculty. Because in general the spaces are public access, no request for access was needed. In the case of specific events taking place within sub spaces, rapport was built with groups and communities who utilize the programmable spaces and formal request was made through email to observe any activities which the communities and individuals saw as tied to specific physical environments.

Once acclimated to the environment, knowing where the religious, secular, and spiritual experiences took place (i.e. the multifaith center and any accompanying spaces around campus

available for prayer, reflection, and religious programming), my intention was to become a passive observer, participating in events and activities after gaining permission from those in leadership. These events offered deeper understanding of the use of the center as well as ways in which the university was supporting the religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

Observation occurred in one of two settings: the common space of the Pasquerilla Center, or during specific programming events in some of the many available spaces which student groups schedule to use within the Center. Documentation took place in the form of field notes with descriptiveness and reflectiveness immediately during and immediately after observation sessions. Observations within the common space of the center were approved by the Director of the Spiritual Center beforehand. Observations within scheduled spaces occurred by invitation or permission. Observations sought to inform understanding of the nature through which the physical spaces support the religious, secular, and spiritual diversity on its campus. The observation protocol in Appendix B outlines the format and holds accountable the researcher to standardize the observations.

Evaluation included analysis of the neutrality of spaces, including how and if spaces were set up to accommodate specific religious, secular, or spiritual traditions over others, the placement of any religious icons which may be permanently affixed within the setting (a cross, Torah, use of iconography, etc.), as well as how spaces were outfitted with adequate materials (prayer rugs, mats, etc.) for religious practices and observances. Observation protocol included sketches of the physical spaces or formal layout and setup documentation.

Interviews, Focus Groups, and Selection Process

Staff and Administration Selection

Email was used to request interviews with the staff. Utilizing the help of the Director of the Center for Ethical and Spiritual Development the administrative unit which oversees the Pasquerilla Multifaith Center, potential staff were identified in collaboration with the researcher. Each identified staff, who were selected based on their relationship with the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development, were emailed an invitation to participate in an individual interview. Appendix C outlines the email invitation. Individuals who are within the structure of the Office for Student Affairs (the office under which the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development affiliates) as well as campus religious staff affiliated with religious organizations of the Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and non-religious communities on campus, were preferred.

Staff Interviews

Interviews with staff participants in the study included a series of questions in a format lasting between 60 and 90 minutes. Follow ups with these some staff were necessary for clarification but all staff except for one were only interviewed once. The focus of the questions were around what staff and administrators know or knew about the aspect of the center (i.e. physical spaces) as well as how the university had implemented policies and practices supporting the campus climate of religious, secular, and spiritual identity. Twelve staff interviews took place, including with the Director of the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development and the Vice President for Student Affairs. Some staff who were part of the initial creation of the center who are remain employed by Penn State were interviewed for historical data purposes. To help support the understanding of how the campus climate is or is not welcoming to all persons, the Director of the LGBTQIA Center at Penn State was interviewed. These external interviews sought to expand the

understanding of the impact of religious, secular, and spiritual policies and practices support other areas of inclusion. Staff from the various campus ministries that affiliate with the University were also in the pool of participants. Specific questions for interviews are available in Appendix D.

Staff interviews utilized a semi-structured format. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to follow a guide, but also to follow the interviewees answers to questions and inquire further based on how the respondent answers specific questions (Bernard, 1988). The semi-structured approach allowed for adaptation of future interviews based on findings and deepens the inquiry. The use of one-on-one interviews for staff over the choice of focus groups is due to the nature of the inquiry: each staff member was offered opportunity to offer personal insights of how the university is supportive of religious, secular, and spiritual identities without influence from others while additionally serving specific purposes of adding to the data collection through their unique role in the university.

Student Participant Selection

In building trust and rapport and trust with campus staff, student participation came through the direct request of the campus religious life staff affiliated with the religious, secular, and spiritual communities housed within the Pasquerilla Center as well as the Center Director. This mode of inquiry limited the study to only those students who are active participants these communities. Luckily, there were nearly 50 religious, secular, and spiritual identifying communities present in the Pasquerilla Center, allowing for a deep pool of potential participants. Unfortunately, the pool did not include Hindu and Atheist students, something which will be later discussed but was a hope of the study. A request was made via email invitation to students,

preselected in collaboration with the associated campus minister, who were invited to respond to a brief screening questionnaire. This can be found in Appendix E & Appendix F.

The screening asked students to identify their current religious, secular, and spiritual identities as well as measure student involvement with the center and in their current participation in the religious, secular, and spiritual life of the university, including their use of the Pasquerilla Student Center. A potential limitation of the study, participants were only chosen to participate in either the focus group or an individual interview if they are actively engaged in their religious or non-religious community and have participated in at least one program of the Center for Ethical and Spiritual Development in the past year. Students who respond with a specific religious, secular, and spiritual affiliation that is of the chosen focus groups were invited for a focus group interview. While limiting in scope, the measures allowed for students who are actively engaged to be able to share experiences that will benefit the quality of the study.

After screening around 10 students from each of: Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, and Evangelical Christian religious identities were selected for invitation to the focus groups. Focus groups were tradition-specific. Because students could not make the time, the focus groups maxed out at a total of 5 students for each of these groups.

Each focus group included a random member being selected for a follow up interview. Four individual follow up interviews took place in a semi-structured format in a location within the Pasquerilla Center at Penn State and lasted around 60 minutes. Questions during the individual interviews sought to enhance the study by providing deeper understanding of perspectives than time allowed during the focus groups and offered narrative of the institutional policies and practices, as well as the physical spaces, which support the university's campus climate. Details of the specific questions can be found in Appendix G.

Student Focus Groups

Student participation in the study began with the use of focus group interviews. Focus groups within the study were designed to allow for participants to draw upon individual experiences in a collective format and for mutual exchange of ideas and perceptions to deepen the inquiry and provide for more comprehensive data collection (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Focus groups were designated based on participants' similar religious, secular, and spiritual identity (i.e. Muslims, Jews, Christians, and Non-Religious) in order to understand the varying experiences of multiple traditions. Individuals who claim an identity as Muslim were placed in the same focus group, as were "Jewish," among others. While in some ways limiting, by having like-practicing participants meet together, I was able to have greater understanding of the similarities and differences between experiences taking place on campus. The focus groups provided a safe space for those with similar religious, secular, and spiritual identities and practices to openly express concerns without fear of hostility from outsiders.

A total of five focus groups, focused each on students from Catholic, Protestant and Evangelical, Jewish, and Muslim identity were facilitated. The focus groups, taking no longer than 90 minutes a piece, took place in an assigned space within the Pasquerilla Center on Penn State's campus. A semi-structured interview format was used. One random student, assigned at the beginning of the focus group based on a drawing, was selected for a second, more focused interview. A second random selection was drawn as well, but was not needed as all randomly selected participants agreed to the individual interview.

Individual Interviews

Individual participant interviews, drawn from the focus groups, provided meaningful additional perspectives and prompted deeper investigation into how students perceived the

campus climate as it relates to their religious, secular, and spiritual identity. Specifically, the questions focused upon asking to give specific examples which have helped to inspire their self and belonging at the university as well as consider how they have utilized the physical spaces within the Pasquerilla Center. The individual interviews allowed for participants to share viewpoints that may not have occurred in the focus groups due to fear, shaming, or simply a lack of time. Individual interviews also attempted to highlight the experience of the individual more than the collective group, providing deeper saturation of data through triangulation.

A total four individual interviews took place following the focus groups. These were conducted for no longer than 60 minutes in length at an assigned location in the Pasquerilla Center on Penn State's campus. A semi-structured interview format was used. Appendix H provides the layout of the individual interviews.

Because of the extensive amount (n=19) of students and staff were who selected for this study, a detailed diagram of all participants has been included in this section. Each participant was given a generic pseudonym which seeks to allow the reader some orientation to the study. See table 4 for a diagram which outlines specific information related to each participant.

Table 4		
<i>Participant Pseudonym Chart</i>		
Participant Pseudonym	Demographic Info	Special Notes
<i>Sam</i>	Male, CFSED staff	*no CFSED staff are affiliated with any religious organization and are all employees of Penn State
<i>Sally</i>	Female CFSED staff	
<i>Keith</i>	Male CFSED staff	
<i>Dan</i>	Male CFSED staff	
<i>Mary</i>	Female	Student affairs administrator
<i>Katherine</i>	Female	Campus minister
<i>Greg</i>	Male	Student affairs administrator
<i>Alex</i>	Male	Student affairs administrator

Table 4. (continued)		
<i>Jack</i>	Male	Director of student affairs unit
<i>Nancy</i>	Female	Faculty member at Penn State
<i>Alan</i>	Male	Student affairs administrator
<i>Jackie</i>	Female	Campus Minister
<i>Jesse</i>	Male, Jewish	Was selected for follow up interview
<i>Sarah</i>	Female, Jewish	
<i>Kristine</i>	Female, Jewish	
<i>Kenneth</i>	Male, Jewish	
<i>Maxine</i>	Female, Roman Catholic	Was selected for follow up interview
<i>Jeff</i>	Male, Roman Catholic	
<i>John</i>	Male, Roman Catholic	
<i>Jennifer</i>	Female, Roman Catholic	
<i>Ray</i>	Male, Roman Catholic	
<i>Sara</i>	Female, Muslim	Was selected for follow up interview
<i>Leslie</i>	Female, Muslim	
<i>Allison</i>	Female, Muslim	
<i>Steve</i>	Male, Muslim	
<i>Dave</i>	Male, Muslim	
<i>Elizabeth</i>	Female, Progressive Christian	Was selected for follow up interview
<i>Megan</i>	Female, Evangelical Christian	
<i>Rose</i>	Female, Progressive Christians	
<i>Jonah</i>	Male, Evangelical Christian	

Data Analysis

Timeline of Data Collection

The IRB occurred in early April 2019 and data collection beginning nearly immediately afterward. See Appendix I for the exemption letter. Data collection lasted just over two months, with site visits in April and May 2019. Pre-screening of individual participants occurred the last two weeks of April 2019 with most interviews taking place in May 2019. Once on site, observation and document review began almost immediately in April 2019. Focus group

interviews took place in May of 2019 as well once rapport was built on campus and all prescreening was complete. Individual interviews of students took place in late May 2019. Data collection was finalized in July 2019.

The first step in the process was to observe spaces and then to identify with the Director a set of documents that provided an overview of the Center and the physical spaces that are contained within it. Alongside this, an inquiry into documents speaking to the creation of the center was requested and approved. Professionals on campus who were determined to be important to the study and understanding the questions of inquiry were selected and emailed for participation. Within the extended visit to the campus, all documents were collected, reviewed, all interviews with staff and administration were performed, and meetings with religious life professionals occurred as a way to request potential student participants. As rapport was built the inquiry deepened and individual interviews with students was conducted through zoom software.

Analysis Process

Qualitative analysis is recursive, meaning that findings emerge continuously, and the study evolves throughout (Mertens, 2010). Such a process results from the concurrency of data collection, analysis, and interpretation of data should be completed intentionally (Creswell, 2009). Recursive data analysis was essential for this study, based on both timeline and the multiple data collection methods being employed.

Because the study intended to understand the dynamics of the campus climate, utilizing focus groups and interviews with students as a way to evaluate the data interpretation of the documents and staff reviews, coding of documents took place before and after interviews took place and many informed questions during the focus groups as well as during individual interviews. I used *a priori* coding to determine a master list of codes that included “physical

environment, campus policy, staffing, rituals, communication of values, management of center, and dedicated purposes” amongst other codes. Many of these codes were derived from the previous research studies used to frame this study (Parks, 2014; Edwards, 2015) which had similar questions related to campus climate. Additionally, Strange and Banning’s (2001) theoretical framework offered some consideration of potential codes to identify in the research. These would be used to specifically questions throughout the focus groups that would allow for a deeper understanding of intersections of student with the Pasquerilla Center, the CFSED, and the larger campus climate. Once data was collected of students, and codification had taken place of interviews, using NVivo software, coding was completed and analyzed. After all data was compiled and initial coding and analysis has occurred within each of the four methods, triangulation was used to determine an overall “scene” of the Multifaith Center and the campus climate. Member checking occurred with a select group of students from a pool of the individual interviews, as well with the Director of the Multifaith Center for trustworthiness and credibility. With all data collected and member checking completed, the final analysis of the study was completed.

Observation data drew upon the above-mentioned methods and followed the bounds of the protocol found in Appendix J. Each observation was catalogued and frequent memoing and rich thick text description methods were employed to refine observations. Memoing occurred once a day during observation to reflect upon what was working well and what observations were necessary to continue to conduct. Memoing was also completed after every two to three staff interviews, allowing for refining of questions and observation protocol based on what staff, especially those from the CFSED, pointed out regarding the Pasquerilla Center Space. Rich thick text descriptions occurred after observations to include not only behaviors, but the context. Each

observation included descriptions of participants, including their religious identity (if identifiable through observation of religious artifacts including dresswear) as well as the context of why and what the individuals were doing (an example was that Muslim students were milling around the Center before Jummah prayer). and was shared with the Director of the Center for clarity and member checking based on experience. Feedback from the Director was placed within memos for further dependability and trustworthiness of the data.

Document review was analyzed following the methods outlined previously and within the bounds of the document review found in Appendix K, with specific focus on documents that relate to policies and practices supporting the religious, secular, and spiritual identities of students and the manifestation of the physical spaces of the Pasquerilla Center. Document review was completed with the support of Bob Smith, the CFSED Director, who allowed me to go into the unofficial archives of the Pasquerilla Center and review nearly 4000 pages of documents.

Focus groups with students was semi-structured in method and followed within the bounds of the format outlined in Appendix D. Interviews took place using zoom software that was pre-approved by IRB and at chair and co-chair's permission. Following interviews, analysis included extensive coding from field notes and the identification of salient and coherent themes.

Individual student interviews, of which there were a total of 4, followed the format from Appendix H. All individual interviews took place over zoom software that was pre-approved by IRB and at chair and co-chair's permission. Each interview was analyzed for understanding of how students perceive the campus physical spaces and policies and practices in support of their own religious, secular, and spiritual identity.

Trustworthiness

To limit biases, I turn to Mertens (2010) discussion on transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility requires provision of a complete and accurate picture of events examined in the study (Mertens, 2010). Based on my biases, I sought to gain input from the participants by doing member-checking via email for clarification. Transcripts from interviews and focus groups were provided to participants requesting feedback. Additionally, vignettes of participants were member-checked via email through correspondence with the participants.

Transferability, which includes the details about the time, place, context, and culture (Mertens, 2010) can help to detail the full context of the interviews which I obtained. Memoing and rich thick descriptions were used to hold accountable the research data. Finally, the use of dependability as detailing the how steps in the process evolve over time (Mertens, 2010) can also be helpful in maintaining unbiased questioning and analysis. Use of a reflection journal helped with dependability for the research.

Throughout the fieldwork process, I maintained field notes of observations as well as document reviews and summative memos after all interviews. Transcriptions of all focus groups and interviews were completed by use of a professional transcription service for purposes of accuracy and timeliness.

On-going review and insights were shared with the Director of the Center as a way to gain clarity into the research and as a way for them to offer feedback regarding the on-going inquiry. Disclosure of field notes and memos will be limited to those inquiries which require clarification. Feedback from the Director directly affected the extent to which document review and observation was utilized throughout the study.

Conclusion

Throughout the study, I sought to gain a comprehensive understanding of how the Center came into being alongside the current experience of individuals, specifically students, who use the space on a regular (at least 1-2 times per semester) basis. The use of bounded case study methodology offered the opportunity to employ multiple methodologies to the analysis. In the end, use of observation, document review, interviews with staff and administration, and focus groups alongside individual follow up interviews with students were the methods used to determine the conclusions of the study.

The study was conducted over a period of 8 weeks and two visits. Beginning in early April 2019, the first visit to the center included extensive observation of the many spaces of the center and its uses. Document review through the help of the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development's Director also took place during this time period. A total of nearly 5000 pages of documents from over a 20-year period were uncovered and disseminated to determine an overall understanding of the center's development and all physical environments. Photographic evidence of all physical environments was obtained by the researcher as artifact. A second visit, beginning in early May, offered the opportunity to conduct more observation, document review, but mostly interviews with staff and administration throughout the university. After departure, focus groups were run with students from several faith traditions (Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical Christian, Muslim, Jewish,) using zoom software and individual interviews were conducted as follow-up. Zoom interview software was used because the students were unavailable during the time I was able to be on-site for the study, which included time during the last 3 weeks of the academic year including during finals. This required that I obtain interviews once the academic year was over and because of Penn State's culture, most of the students have left campus for the summer.

As researcher, I sought to understand the campus of Penn State as a typical student might on a regular basis. I was lucky enough to have a host family who lived under a mile from campus (in the rural area of town) and thus I walked every to the edge of campus and then another half to two-thirds of a mile to the Pasquerilla Center, the focus on this study. I attended evening events on campus, walked throughout the entirety of campus anytime between around 6:30 AM to around 11 PM at night, understanding the ways in which the campus operated and the flows of traffic of individuals came and went.

I sought to understand how the Pasquerilla Center, prominently located on the North side of campus, was present in the lives of the members of the Penn State community.

Researching a university and its climate for religious, secular, and spiritual identities on campus is a complex process which requires contextual data from multiple sources. The use of qualitative case study methodology was not only desirable, but imperative, as a means to achieve reliable and comprehensive data for analysis. By using Pennsylvania State University as the bounded case, the opportunity existed to study and evaluate an institution that has made significant policy and practice changes as example for the future of higher education research as well as practice. The comprehensive analysis began with data collection and then proceeded onward with data analysis to be outlining in the forthcoming chapters of this study.

CHAPTER 4: THE HISTORY OF THE PASQUERILLA CENTER

The current study was conducted to illuminate ways in which universities might foster a campus climate to better support a growing and changing field, one that includes religious, secular, and spiritual identities. Specifically, the study addressed the question of whether a physical environment, in this case a multifaith center, may help to promote a campus climate of inclusion for all forms of religious, secular, and spiritual identities; this was a principal goal of the study. The setting of the study, Pennsylvania (Penn) State University, was selected due to its unique nature as the location of the largest multifaith center in North America and its signature office, the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development.

The study sought to provide an analysis of three specific questions of the campus climate in considering religious, secular, and spiritual identities. These questions are as follows:

- a) How does a physical environment such as a multifaith center support religious, secular, and spiritual diversity of the campus environment?
- b) What role does a multifaith office and center play in the campus climate of the institution?
- c) What are the experiences of religiously affiliated students at an institution which has created a center and a physical environment for religious, secular, and spiritual identity?

Using Strange and Banning's (2001) *Educating by Design* theoretical framework, the study analyzed the current climate of Penn State with respect to four tenets: physical environments, aggregate environments, organizational environments, and constructed environments.

Collectively, these four areas of evaluation serve as a lens through which to understand the university as an institution of purpose and place (Strange & Banning, 2001).

Each research question required the different tenets to be considered in various ways as appropriate to the questions themselves.

As the study began, I sought to understand two vantage points that would impact the study itself as well as myself as researcher. First, I explored the history of the Pasquerilla Center, combing through documents and interviewing staff to gain a greater understanding of how the center became what it is today. A consideration of this history makes up the rest of Chapter 4; the research questions and their findings follow in Chapters 5, 6, and 7, respectively.

The History of the Pasquerilla Center

To understand the Pasquerilla Center and its history is important. Few public institutions have gone so far as to create entire buildings dedicated to religious life on campus (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). The Pasquerilla Center is the largest “multifaith center” in North America (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). Divided into almost two dozen multipurpose rooms and spaces, the center is expansive and capable of housing nearly 20 events at the same time. The door I entered each day is merely one of the five separate main floor entrances leading to the main lobby. In the lobby are a set of chairs and loveseats fashioned into a square with a coffee table in the middle. There is also the central office and its main desk. Housed here is the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development, staffed by a director and seven other staff members. For the purposes of this study, this center will be referred to as CFSED to eliminate confusion regarding reference to the Pasquerilla Center, the physical building itself in which the CFSED is housed and operates (Figure 1). The CFSED is a unit of the Office for Spiritual Affairs and provides oversight unit of the Pasquerilla Center. The figure is situated from left to right, South to North, and constitutes the entire plan of the center, with the expansion on the left hand side and the original building including the Eisenhower chapel in gray to the right.

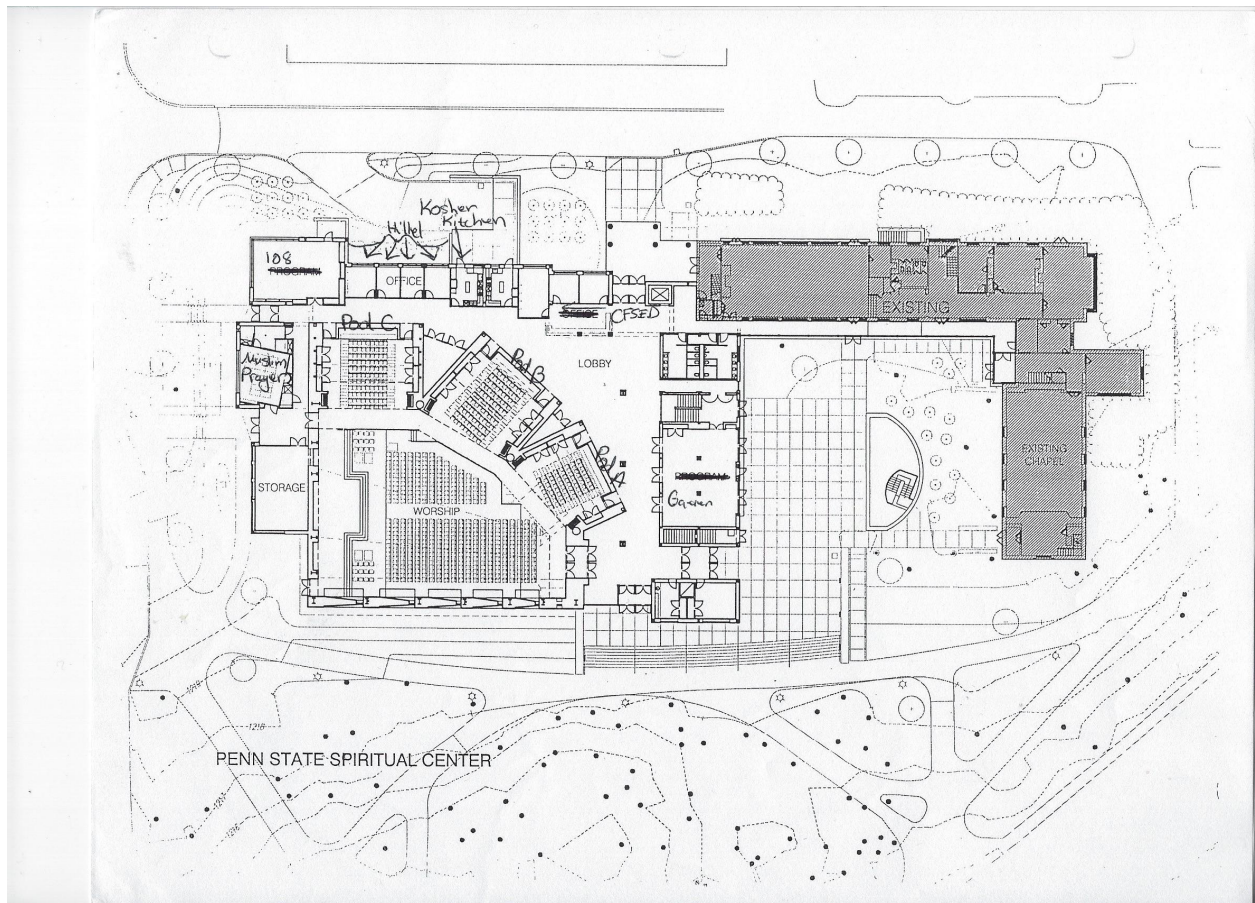


Figure 1. Architectural plans of the Pasquerilla Spiritual Center. Obtained during document review directly from Director of CFSED.

On most mornings, I entered the Pasquerilla Center around 8 a.m., when the center was unsurprisingly quiet, but all I had to do was wait for a short time until a bustling crowd of students, faculty, and staff from many places and identities to emerge. Starting at around 10 a.m., students would come streaming into the building, some on their way to use the facilities, others coming to study, a few to see staff members, and many for a programming event or other pre-scheduled meeting or gathering.

The CFSED staff likewise had a rhythm. The Director, Bob Smith, was among the first to arrive each day. His presence loomed large over the CFSED, both because he has been there

since 2005 as Director and because he has significant influence within the Pasquerilla Center itself. Interactions with the Director felt genuinely welcoming to me, as he intentionally kept his door open. Passersby in the center could easily determine that he was in the office with a quick peek around the corner or a well-focused glance from the lobby. If he was present, he almost certainly would greet the students, even if he was in the middle of something else (observation, April 13, 2019).

Other staff members, including the Assistant Director and Administrative Assistant, who were both interviewed for the study, were slightly less approachable, but perhaps only because the CRSED's Director was the clear person to which others deferred in the office. Other staff in the center included those who oversee the custodial services and the night staff, working hours that typically begin at either noon or 3 p.m. and continue as late as 11 p.m. They would sit at the main desk area, which could be described as an atrium. Their visibility was pronounced; as an example, one of the staff members specifically was greeted by almost every student who came through. This was a clear example of their commitment to and role in engaging with students. This was an initial impression which was later validated through interviews and observation (observation April 15, 2019).

The Pasquerilla Center would progressively become more bustling with noise and movement of individuals throughout the day. By between 4 p.m. and 7:30 or 8:00 p.m., I noted there to be as many as 100 to 150 persons in the building at any one time (observation April 15, 2019). On Thursday and Friday evenings many of the religious organizations hold events. On Fridays, Hillel, one of two Jewish communities on campus, hosted Shabbat. During Shabbat, the number of people in the Center often swelled to an estimated 300 or more (observation April 17,

2019). Similarly, during Roman Catholic Mass at 5 p.m. on Saturday and all morning on Sundays, the Center had high numbers of individuals in the space (observation April 19, 2019).

The main area of the Center itself, even with all of its activity, is really just the beginning of the larger ecosystem. The lobby area is part of the most recent expansion of the Center, but the corridors and hallways lead to the original building, a chapel space designed in the 1950s, mostly for Christian and Jewish students. In order to understand the ways in which the study has looked at the physical spaces, one first has to understand how they came into being.

The History of the Center

On May 2, 2003, Penn State University dedicated the expansion of its original chapel space, renaming it the Frank and Sylvia “Pasquerilla Center” (participant SAM). The Center is a massive 60,000 square foot building located on the north side of campus, across the street from the Pattee and Paterno Library. Located near what is becoming known as the “art district” of campus, the Pasquerilla Center is at the center of many paths and walkways on a campus of over 40,000 students. But the center began in the 1950s, under the leadership of President Milton Eisenhower, the brother of President Dwight D. Eisenhower (SAM, personal communication, April 28, 2019).

On October 22, 1955, ground was broken on what is still known as known as the Eisenhower Chapel, named in honor of Helen Eakin Eisenhower, which includes a relatively small space of around 12,000 square feet that to this day embodies a very Catholic presence (Penn State Magazine, 2003). The chapel, complete with stained glass, a mounted metal cross on its exterior, and pews that still include kneelers for Mass, demonstrates the celebration of Christian identity. In the room adjacent to the front of the chapel, a small prayer chapel stands as a behavioral trace of the Catholic community. The prayer chapel is adorned with prayer candles,

a Christ candle, holy oils, a large print Bible, a large cross on an altar, and icons of Jesus and of the Virgin Mary, who in Christian traditions is known as the mother of Jesus (observation April 16, 2019).

This space was designed for use by Christian students on campus in 1957. President Eisenhower himself laid the cornerstone (Penn State, n.d.). For over 20 years it was the only presence on campus that demonstrated Penn State's commitment to religious inclusion. While the space has always been available to anyone, including all members of the Penn State community, it demonstrated through its physical markers a clear preference toward Christians and especially Catholics.

In the 1970s, the Center was expanded to include office spaces, as well as the Frizzell Room, named in honor of the late John Henry Frizzell, who was University Chaplain from 1928 to 1948 (SAM, personal communication, April 28, 2019). This expansion extended the architectural footprint of the chapel and offered opportunities for community gatherings as well as members of the campus community to hold events near the the Eisenhower chapel.

By 1995, the Catholic community's numbers on campus had far outgrown the capacity of the Eisenhower Chapel. This growth problem had been predicted during the 1975 expansion, by the Catholic Priests although their repeated notice to the university garnered little response (interviews with Participant ELIZABETH0). The institution felt that while the presence of the Catholic community was important, it could not do more work to expand the chapel space for fear of violating the 1st Amendment's Establishment Clause. But within the Catholic community, the most powerful man at Penn State for more than 30 years would give new opportunity and an expanded vision for what the chapel space could become. His name was Joe Paterno.

Joe Paterno and the Multifaith Center Expansion

Joe Paterno was and is legendary on the Penn State campus. The coach with the most winning record in NCAA collegiate football history, Joe Paterno was a student at Penn State himself and became the head football coach in 1966. But Joe Paterno's legacy at Penn State is marred with scandal, a fact that cannot be overlooked despite what was found to be significant influence on the creation of the Pasquerilla Center. Paterno's tenure at Penn State came to an abrupt end in 2011 when Jerry Sandusky, an assistant head football coach, was found to have sexually molested several boys, a fact that had been brought to Paterno's attention numerous times (Tracy, 2016). Paterno, seeking to discredit or dismiss the accusations, appeared to have covered up the complaints. He not only retained Jerry Sandusky but continued to attempt to keep the reports from surfacing. The scandal and criminal charges caused Penn State to dismiss Paterno from his duties (Penn State, n.d.).

I do not seek in this reflection to provide any credibility to Paterno, but rather to simply highlight the history of a building for which he and his wife Sue are in many ways responsible. Joe and Sue Paterno were members of the Catholic church off campus, but in the mid-1990s had a falling out with the Catholic community after an incident in which their daughter was injured in a trampoline incident (interviews with Participant ELIZABETH). They began attending on-campus services, something that Sue Paterno, who was widowed in late 2012, still does today. Seeing an opportunity, the Catholic priests approached Joe Paterno about their idea to expand the center. Paterno went to the campus administration for support on their behalf (interviews with participant ELIZABETH0). The university resisted, arguing once again that to expand the chapel as a space to support only Catholic students would not go over well and may have legal ramifications.

In response, an idea was born. Joe Paterno and other administrators would turn toward the idea of expanding to build a multifaith center (interviews with participant ELIZABETH).

The first approach was to take the concept up the chain to President Graham Spanier, who would decline the offer, stating in interviews that “As long as I’m President of Penn State, the Chapel will never be expanded.” He later clarified that he was “always behind the idea,” but that that politics were difficult to overcome. To respond to what was clearly a “no” from the President, Joe Paterno and members of the campus administration turned to the board of regents. Specifically, they approached Mimi Coopersmith Freman, a powerful regent who herself was Jewish and held significant relationships with the Jewish community in Philadelphia (interviews with participant ELIZABETH). Sensing an opportunity, Coopersmith Freman and another member of the board of regents would rebuke President’s Spanier’s refusal, instead insisting that the idea be considered. In response, Spanier relented. “If it’s going to happen anyway, I might as well get on board,” (Participant ELIZABETH).

The concept would be explored heavily over a period of 18 months, with a principal donor prospect in the form of Frank Pasquerilla and his son Mark, family owners of several malls and hotels in Pennsylvania. In interviews with development staff, I learned that “no one had a relationship with this family except Joe,” (Participant ELIZABETH). When everyone arrived to the meeting,

Graham (President Spanier) did the initial conversation to open the discussion, but very quickly Joe (Paterno) sort of took over. He pulled out architectural drawings that no one knew existed. Joe had gone and had an architect do a drawing for the potential center and none of us knew about it. My heart sort of sunk in that moment, but Joe went over the drawings and then leaned into Frank and Mark and said to them that we need five million

dollars from you to make this happen. Both Graham and I were stunned and I thought to myself, well, we just lost them (the gift). (Participant ELIZABETH)

But Paterno had actually orchestrated a significant moment in the history of the center. “It took negotiation, but eventually Frank and Mark agreed to the amount...over a period of a few years” (Participant ELIZABETH). The Center would additionally be funded by a million-dollar gift from the Paternos themselves, alongside funding from the Hillel organization, who, like the Catholic community, wanted dedicated spaces included in the development of the center (document review). In all, nearly \$9 million was raised from 17 major donors and an additional \$1 million was raised from smaller donors or from the chapel’s endowment (document review). By late 1999, the reality that a Center would be built was made public, and the institution began receiving bids to begin construction (document review).

Construction and Opening

In 2001, after the September 11th terrorist attacks in the United States, the campus started paying special attention to its soon to be expanded multifaith center, as story after story began to run in both the campus development magazine and the university newspaper (Interview with SAM). The university clearly wished to make it known that they were leading the efforts to provide a safe and welcoming place for students of all traditions in the wake of the attacks. The admissions office started promoting the creation of the center as early as February 2002, more than a year before the center would be finalized (Interview with SAM).

Finally, the center’s dedication on May 2, 2003 would serve as the end of one era of Penn State’s support for religious, secular, and spiritual identities (Penn State n.d.). With its opening, the center would be not only known at Penn State, but across the country within circles of

religious life in higher education. Administrators recounted that the early years saw groups of administrators from several institutions both reaching out and making trips to State College to view the center and to inquire about its creation (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012): One participant noted,

People would just call us day after day having heard about the center and would stop by for a visit. We were always welcoming and many of us surprised at just how interested people were. And we never really did much in the way of advertising it (Participant ELIZABETH).

These moments became more and more frequent over time as individuals across the United States came to learn of the Center's creation.

Though the center was in full operation in fall 2003, the center lacked a pipe organ within its worship space, which was added later. The architectural firm had provided for it within the plans, but there was a dispute between the Jewish and Catholic communities as to whether it was appropriate or if it again spoke too deeply to Christian preference. It would significantly increase the cost of the building project but would reasonably only be used by the Christian community (interviews with participant ELIZABETH). It would be more than two years later that the issue would be resolved, following another significant financial investment by the Paterno family in the form of a \$500,000 lead gift, along with sizable gifts from nearly 30 other donors. In the end, the pipe organ, at a total cost of nearly \$1.8 million, was installed and dedicated on November 6, 2005 (document review). With this, the center and its main components were completed, and its principal spaces and components remain the same today, as was explored in the course of the study.

As mentioned previously, understanding what brought the Pasquerilla Center from its humble beginnings to its stature as the largest multifaith center in North America is important. It is rare to find institutions of higher education erecting buildings that support religious life on campus. The history of Penn State's center illustrates that institutions can create new pathways toward inclusion of religious identities through the creation of spaces. The rest of the study, and Chapter 5 specifically, carefully examine how the Pasquerilla Center and its physical spaces may affect the campus climate for religious, secular, and spiritual identities. Chapter 6 looks at the influence of the CFSED upon the campus climate, and Chapter 7 explores the student experience. Both chapters offer a greater understanding of why the center was built in the first place and attempts to document if it is having any affect upon the student experience.

CHAPTER 5: THE SPACES OF PASQUERILLA

Framing the Physical Spaces Analysis

Strange and Banning's (2001) *Educating by Design* outlines a methodological framework from which this study and its evaluations were considered. The first research question asks, "How does a physical environment such as the Pasquerilla Multifaith Center support the religious, secular, and spiritual diversity of the campus environment?" The question was framed and evaluated using the first of four tenets of the theoretical framework: physical environments. To effectively address this question, the use of interviews with students as well as administrative staff, observation, and document review was employed.

When considering physical spaces, Strange and Banning (2001) provided ways in which to properly evaluate and understand what the physical setting conveys to the users. This includes considering the behavioral markers of a setting, such as how chairs are arranged and the expected forms of learning experiences which would take place in a lecture hall of forward-facing chairs (lecture or symposium) versus a room with round tables (discussions and group work). In addition, artifacts such as a Bible, Koran, or Torah, might all illustrate that the use of a space is for religious practice of a certain type, depending on which of these are present. This "physical" space itself can also be a determination about who is expected to use the environment, such as how a chapel is traditionally laid out versus how a Muslim prayer space is typically arranged. Because certain environments are more designated for a specific community through these markers, there is a natural segmentation of students which takes place throughout the Pasquerilla Center.

The study revealed that within the physical spaces of the Pasquerilla Center several "behavioral settings" were present (Rapoport, 1982). These settings can function like nonverbal

mnemonic devices (Strange & Banning, 2016) and encode messaging about how the spaces are to be used. For example, non-Jewish students using the space in which the Torah Ark is kept, as well as the Jewish songbooks and Talmud readings (all important Jewish texts), refrained at all times from eating non-Kosher meals within the space as a sign of reverence. Several of these examples are noted throughout the study.

Additionally, artifacts are prevalent throughout the center. These include signage, furnishing, arts, and adornments (Prown, 1982). These artifacts serve as markers of inclusion or exclusion for certain groups within the study. For example, the small prayer chapel, located in the original wing of the Pasquerilla Center, included holy oils, pictures of Jesus, icons of the Virgin Mary, and had a Bible visible in the room. These artifacts were demonstrations of which groups are most welcome in the spaces and the desired use of the space itself. These can also be known as “behavioral traces,” a concept Strange and Banning borrow from Zeisel and Eberhard (2006). These traces were essentially any indication left from a previous user suggesting how the space was to be used. Behavioral traces and their benefits and consequences are a vital part of this study, in which I evaluate why neutrality of spaces is essential so that multiple faith traditions may feel a sense of belonging throughout the center.

Finally, throughout the study, the ways spaces are used as places of “learning” are considered (Strange & Banning, 2001). Strange’s outline of how campuses need be inclusive, welcoming, functional, sociopetal, flexible, reflective, regenerative, distinctive, sustainable, and aesthetic served as a lens through which to understand appropriate usage and alignment to intended purpose (Strange & Banning, 2001). Specifically, the ways in which these characteristics are present in and throughout the Pasquerilla Center speaks to alignment of campus climate and a sense of belonging that students demonstrated.

Surprise might be the only emotion that adequately summarizes the experience of walking into the Pasquerilla Center for the first time.. The building is immense, larger than any other multifaith center of its kind in the United States. One might expect for the space to simply be an aesthetically pleasing campus building; but what begins to become apparent is that this is a building that has been intricately thought out and designed. The Pasquerilla Center is made of up of almost two dozen meeting rooms and environments, each of which individually provides opportunities for interaction and programming. Additionally, there are 32 offices designed for student groups to have shared space with one another available. Figure 1 includes the architectural drawing of the entire space. In order to understand how the physical environments of the Pasquerilla Center affect the campus climate, this study includes a room-by-room evaluation of each of the physical spaces which together make up the Pasquerilla Center. The largest and most iconic of these spaces, the Worship Hall, is where this study now focuses. The hall can be seen in the following pictures.



Figure 2. Worship Hall from front looking toward closed pod doors. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.



Figure 3. Worship hall from front looking towards balcony and organ. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.



Figure 4: Worship hall from balcony looking toward front altar. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.

The Physical Spaces

The Worship Hall and Pods

The least frequently scheduled and yet most expansive part of the Pasquerilla Center is the Worship Hall, (see Figures 2, 3, and 4). Rarely used by non-Christian students (interviews with Participant ELIZABETH), the space is just over 6,000 square feet in size. The worship hall features a descending concrete floor with padded and bolted down auditorium chairs facing toward a slightly raised stage with a large altar/table and a front wall with a substantial painting hanging behind it. The room and its behavioral markers (Strange & Banning, 2001) indicated that the room is to be used mostly by Christian students, and thus creates a natural segmentation of the student populations within the building. This type of segmentation was found throughout the study. The room can be accessed through several entrances, but for most individuals entry is

through a double set of doors at the back of the chapel that is directly inside and to the left of one of the main entrances. Participants entering the space for worship activities could choose to enter the building, turn left and walk into the worship space without seeing almost anything else in the entire building.

When entering the space from this direction, an almost 30-foot-high ceiling with hanging lights greets worshippers. Unlike the markings of many traditional Christian churches, three different types of lights offer a more modern feel to the worship hall (observation, April 16, 2019). Unlike a Gothic or Greco-Roman style cathedral, the light is highly luminescent and bright. “The space has high vaulted ceilings which offer the user the feeling as though they are in a massive modern church. The lighting, modern in its design, feels warm even almost 20 years after the center was opened,” (observation, April 16, 2019). During daytime hours, one can walk into the space and experience the stained glass of the walls, which only provide coloration, not decoration in the form of any standard Christian or Jewish art or iconography. Visitors can observe the colors move across the building as the sun hits the windows in different ways throughout the morning and evening (observation, April 19, 2019).

The front altar of the space is almost 10 feet long, and 4 feet wide from front to back, and while mobile, almost always remains in the center of the room. The Catholic community uses the space more than any other group, with Mass on Saturday evening, twice on Sunday morning, and again on Sunday evening (interviews with Participant ELIZABETH, SAM). The table, which itself has not been consecrated and thus is not considered an altar by the Catholic community, is simply present for all to see in the room’s standard set up. To understand this space, I would often sit for long periods of observation just to understand how the space changed. One comment from my field notes highlighted this. *“It’s remarkable how the space changes over time and*

throughout the day. I wonder how many people see this normally, as I have observed no usage of the chapel during most days of the week,” (observation, April 19, 2019).

The worship hall does not have a seating balcony. As individuals walk into the middle of the room via the center aisle which divides the aforementioned padded lecture seats, the organ above the entrance becomes visible when looking back. Seeing it is a clear reminder of Catholic and Protestant worship, and hearing it reminded me of a traditional Christian service, something that was clearly intended by the funders who gave to its purchase and installation.

When the space is filled for weddings, Mass, or other religious services, its expansiveness nevertheless feels appropriate. Visitors during the daytime, when there are typically no activities, can hear the space echo which might create the feeling that the space is too big, feeling cold both in temperature and setting. This is perhaps why it is the least used space in the building.

Throughout the study, this space was the least visited by those who came to the Pasquerilla Center; it sat empty throughout most every day of the study with the exception the above-mentioned events (observations on April 17, 2019). This may be in part be because the entrance to the worship hall is not visible from the central area of the main lobby and is easily missed if the individual is not specifically looking for the space. But the worship hall’s main physical space is accompanied by three additional spaces, called “pods,” which are independent spaces that can be opened up and connected to the main space. Figures 4 and 5 show two of these spaces. Understanding the versatility of these spaces begins to show a picture of just how intelligently designed the Pasquerilla Center is.



Figure 5. Pod C. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.



Figure 6. Pod B with detailed view of chair risers. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.

“Pods”

The worship hall has the ability to expand. Running along the right-hand side of the worship hall are three sets of accordion walls that open up to reveal what are known as pod A, pod B, and pod C. These “pods” are in fact extensions of the original worship hall plan that are in themselves programmable spaces. Each of these rooms can, and are, frequently used for individual programming. The pods often also serve as an extension for the worship hall, allowing the worship hall seating to expand from 450 to 750 persons (interviews with Participant ELIZABETH). Each pod space averages around 950 square feet, bringing the entire worship hall to just over 9,000 square feet when all four rooms are utilized.

The pods use a relatively simple design. Pullout bleachers with padded seats matching those in the main area of the worship hall line one wall of each of the pods. When they pull out, they take up the entire floor space. When closed, and especially when the accordion walls are closed, the pods create an intimate experience for programming and group gathering. “The space today feels more closed, like for a smaller, more intimate event. When the pods are open, the space feels like a concert hall, with music ready to echo off in every direction” (observation, April 22, 2019). During my site visit, these rooms would be changed almost every day. They were used by various campus ministries for their Chinese and English discussion groups with small tables for two. They often had setups where chairs were set in rounds; once, the rooms were set with round tables for six, totaling seating for 50. Events in the space would vary from a Bible study one night to a club meeting for a religious student group to a small dinner event with multiple religious communities. The floors, made of concrete, kept the room sterile and cold, and lighting was subdued. The rooms were the most programmed in the center.

Each of the pods are accessed primarily through the lobby. Unlike the chapel, the main entrance of which is not visible from the middle of the lobby, the pods have doors leading from the central area of the lobby into each of them. In order to access the worship hall, it is necessary to go through another door, set into one of the many panels of the accordion walls that close off the main pods to the worship hall. Each of the pods has a clear demarcation outside of its entrance on the wall that lines the hallway off one side of the lobby.

Each of these pods is neutral or what could be described as secular in its religious expression, as there are no icons or religious markers of any kind in the spaces. No artifacts are stored within these spaces, no visible signs of any religious preference are made, and no storage of religious icons or materials are left in these spaces. The spaces are a little different than an average reservable space on campus, and groups tend to use the space for a variety of events. No indication from interviews were found that these spaces are particularly special within the center. Center staff did highlight that one of the pods was previously used for Jumma prayers before the Frizzell room became the space for these Friday gatherings (interviews with participant MARY). These spaces were used by many groups across all faith traditions represented in the center. “These pods may be the most versatile of all the spaces within the center, as this week alone, the Hindus, Jews, several Christian groups, the Muslim community, and outside groups have all used these spaces” (observation April 19, 2019). This observation was verified through a review of a documents provided by the CFSED staff that outlined who was reserving what spaces and when.

Strange and Banning’s (2001) model would affirm that these pods, especially on their own, represented an expression of neutrality. These pods may be the most diversified space within the Pasquerilla Center in their usage because in their neutrality, any number of religious

communities are likely to use the space in comparison to spaces which have specific purposes, such as a small prayer chapel or a Kosher kitchen. Second to the pods, the next most versatile room I found during the study was the Garden Room, which was also a very visible space within the Pasquerilla Center.



Figure 6: Garden Room from front facing toward back wall and patio windows. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.

The Garden Room

Outside of the worship hall, the most static of rooms in terms of setup within the Pasquerilla Center appeared to be the Garden Room (see Figure 6), which is the largest multipurpose room adjacent to the main lobby area of the Pasquerilla Center. Glass front windows line one side of the room and separate it from the lobby. Two sets of double doors, one of either end of the glass walls, are the principal ways in which individuals enter the space. On

the opposite wall, the Garden Room exits onto the patio of the complex, and again has glass walls running along the entire length of the room. At one end, a closet behind double doors stores a variety of items, including a few spare tables, rolling marker boards, and serves as a coatroom during events (observation, April 16, 2019).

The room is outfitted with a moderately tight arrangement of round tables, seating for eight at each table, and almost nothing else. The lighting is bright and welcoming, florescent in nature but which can be moderated with dimming switches. During the day, the light from outdoors, especially on sunny days, is enough that most individuals using the space casually will simply utilize the natural light (observation, April 17, 2019).

The use of the space is somewhat unique within the center. The room is a favorite among groups from around campus, and it is booked extensively by faculty offices and other co-curricular units for breakfasts, award ceremonies, and meetings that include up to around 50 people. “The space never changes, but everyone seems to use it. Students stopped by a couple of hours ago, now they are setting up for a French Studies awards ceremony” (observation, April 18, 2019). Because of its static nature, anyone who comes to the space knows the setup is in round tables has an available projector and a lectern, both of which are stored in the room’s closet. Additionally, students tend to use the space as a study area when the space is available, sometimes working individually and other times working in teams (observation, April 17, 2019).

Observation of this space revealed perhaps the first visible sign of the center’s intended purpose to provide a space for a variety of students. For several days during my observation, a group of Muslim students began arriving around late morning. They would eat together, study together, and at times simply be together in the Garden room. “These same students have been here each day around the same time (10:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.) and are basically just

hanging out in the back corner” (observation April 18, 2019). When asked why they used the space, students remarked on its simplicity and its usability.

Participant SARA remarked, “I think I started coming here because it just was a nice quiet place to study. But if you ask me to really consider it, I guess I feel more like it is a place where I can just be me. We gather here on campus and I’ve been doing so since I started [going to Penn State]” (cite this interview). Other students remarked that the room was “well lit,” was “a convenient place to gather,” and that it was “a place to be before Jummah or after prayers” (Participants ALLISON, STEVE).

The Garden Room presents another example of behavioral traces that Strange and Banning (2001) would attest affirms that the space is meant for everyone, as well as mostly used by groups and individuals to study and do work together. Because the round tables are visible from the lobby and room usage is always public, (anyone can see who and what is happening in the room from the lobby at any time), the behaviors become cyclical over time. A student who stops by will come to know that the space is available for study when others are not using it. Because the room was designed for these kinds of activities, is unlocked and open for students. Ultimately, it is reserved for events that tend to be community-oriented in nature. The Garden room again presents possibilities of connections within the Pasquerilla Center that affirm a holistic campus climate for religious, secular, and spiritual identities to come together with outside communities as well. Other spaces in and throughout the center follow this trend and each are explored and highlighted in turn.



Figure 7. Room 108 facing toward Torah Ark door. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.



Figure 8. Room 108 with Torahs and songbooks. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.

Other Program Spaces

One of the main reservable rooms in the center is a student lounge, room 108, shown in Figures 7 and 8 respectively, which is near the end of the hallway nearest to the southwest entrance of the building. It is almost directly across the hall from the Muslim prayer room and ablution stations. The room, a 500-square-foot carpeted space, is mostly used by religious groups for programming, including dinners and Shabbat. One wall consists entirely of built-in bookshelves that extend to the standard-height ceiling and was where most of the Jewish communities Torahs and songbooks were stored. The room has a distinctly Jewish feel, and it is also the room in which the Torah Ark is kept. The Ark is stored behind a cedar lined wall with double doors over the closet; it is are marked in Hebrew with the words “From Generation to Generation.” An artistically designed light over the doors provides a sense of reverence for the Ark stored behind the doors, which holds three separate Torahs, all artifactual evidence of the presence of and welcoming environment created for the Jewish community on campus.

The space is used by more than just the Jewish community. Christian groups will use the space as well throughout the week for events from a Bible study to a speaker or other events. In conversations with staff, they noted that the space is respected by those groups as a space in which food is either kept Kosher or not served. There are many groups that use it, not just the Jewish community. One Jewish participant noted, “No one seems to have any real issue with it, though we do make sure it is available for the Jewish community on Friday evenings and typically as they have events” (Participant KRISTINE).

Friday evenings is the most consistently reserved time for these activities in this room as the Jewish community holds Shabbat there. The room can hold around 80 people and is relatively small space for the Jewish community to use, but it is the most practical space because

of the storage of the Torah Ark. Overall, the space is used by a relatively diverse group of students, even though artifacts clearly dictate a preference toward the Jewish community as the principal user.

Spaces used by groups from multiple religious traditions is normal at the Pasquerilla Center. But because Room 108 is so identified with the Jewish community, including artifacts associated with the Jewish community, I expected the space to be only used by Hillel or Chabad. I was wrong. “I just noticed that one of the Christian groups has reserved 108, so I asked (staff) what that was about. (Staff) showed me a table of all the groups that use it and that they only keep it for the Jewish community on Friday nights” (observation, April 26, 2019). Other spaces like the Eisenhower Chapel and the Prayer Room openly display behavioral traces and artifacts that speak toward groups from a specific religious tradition being the principal users. These other spaces are thus used by those groups almost exclusively. In the instance of room 108, the Pasquerilla Center community has demonstrated a second tenet of Strange and Banning’s (2001) theoretical framework: constructed environments.

The constructed environment tenet states that the culture sets the tone for what occurs and who is welcome. If the culture of the space is that it is used by multiple groups even if there is a clear set of artifacts of one particular faith tradition, it could be argued that culture is a more powerful marker of usage than even the physical environment. Yet, other spaces within the center are clearly demarcated toward a particular preference and illustrate a principle Strange and Banning (2016) note as an antagonistic behavioral setting marker. Because the space has a constructed environment in which a room with a specific overtone of religious identity is being used by multiple groups, there is arguably a culture of respect within the spaces. In this way, the physical space has helped to foster a climate of inclusion for religious, secular, and spiritual

identities that is being manifested by the groups themselves. And thus, there is a sense of internally created positive campus climate the religious communities are fostering and maintaining for one another. This can also be seen in the use of the kitchens, and especially the Kosher kitchen, which is considered next.

The Kosher Kitchen



Figure 9. Kosher kitchen. Photographed by Ben Wideman August 2019.

Within the Pasquerilla Center there are three kitchens, two of which are accessed from the main lobby area. The general kitchen is used by a variety of groups. The kitchen is the principal space for the staff of the CFSED. But the Kosher kitchen, located between the atrium area in the main lobby and the Jewish lounge at the end of the hallway, is only used by the Hillel and Chabad communities. This was the most visible presence of the Jewish community within the Center.

Kosher is a dietary option of the Jewish community that most Orthodox and many conservative and reformed Jews keep as a part of their religious practice (Hillel, n.d.). Kosher

practices require that meat and dairy items be stored and consumed separately (Hillel, n.d.). Additionally, Kosher kitchens have items like pots and pans effectively designated as Kosher through processes of ritual washing and blessing. It is important to note that the vessels of food preparation are the ones that are Kosher. Needless to say, a “Kosher kitchen” upholds specific regulations. The kitchen was installed as a part of the expansion of the center and it was one of Hillel’s requirements in their decision to make the \$500,000 investment in the center in 2001.

Unlike the two other kitchens, the Kosher kitchen remains locked and is maintained by the Jewish and Hillel staff. “It seems weird that even the CFSED don’t go into the space and that Hillel staff seem to each have keys to the Kosher kitchen” (observation, April 21, 2019). During Passover the space is even more restricted, when the kitchen has to be thoroughly cleaned and prepared for the weeklong holiday in which Jews refrain from eating even leavened bread.. Passover occurred during the timeframe of this study and I was able to observe the practices of those within the center during that time. “Every day this week, the Hillel staff have been making lunches with the students. Today for Shabbat they are serving pizza on unleavened crackers” (observation, April 19, 2019).

For the most part, because of its exclusive use by the Jewish community, most other students simply did not even consider using the space. But students of other faith traditions did know of the Kosher kitchen, and some were even able to explain some of the Kosher rules. In interviews, students were able to point out which kitchen was Kosher and that this was intended for the Jewish students. Non-Jewish participants stated that they had never been in the kitchen. Most student participants who were not Jewish remarked that they had never used the Kosher kitchen at Pasquerilla (Participant MEGAN).

Awareness of the Kosher kitchen among those of non-Christian traditions is significant and aligns with current data of appreciative attitudes of Jewish identities by non-Jews (Rockenbach et al., 2017). Christian-identifying students tended to, when asked, know little about the specifics of Kosher practices or rules. Instead, they simply knew that the kitchen was for the Jewish students.

The fact that a major university, in its design of a space, was willing to include a full Kosher kitchen is somewhat significant. The Pasquerilla Center is clearly somewhat designed with the Jewish community in mind, in alignment with the theory of physical space. This is likely due to the financial investment the Jewish community made in the creation of the space. For many of the more than 60 other religiously affiliated student groups, the only spaces they are granted are those for the student organizations. This includes shared office spaces far from the lobby and down the main corridor that connects the Eisenhower Chapel and the original building space with the more recent expansions. These spaces are able to provide insight into the climate for Jewish identifying students on campus.

Overall, Hillel's presence within the Pasquerilla Center is the most significant of Jewish life on campus. Its presence within the Pasquerilla Center also creates once again a natural segmentation of the building, in which the Jewish students are more likely to be present near and in the Hillel offices, room 108 where the Torah Ark is located, and the Kosher kitchen, all of which are within the same wing of the building. Between the Kosher kitchen and the Jewish student lounge lie five office spaces, all of which are the Hillel offices. The Jewish community on campus is sizable, though Penn State does not keep official records. The incorporation of Hillel offices was recommended in January of 2001 during the design phase of the Center. Hillel's offices help to make the Jewish presence visible within the center itself. Most

of these offices simply lie in the corridor between the southwest entrance of the building to the lobby area and the atrium where the CFSED is housed. Between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., there is rarely ever a time during the work week in which a Hillel staff member is not present and available to meet with students. Additionally, on most days, activities were taking place in this corridor that were either spontaneous or scheduled by Hillel. Their presence in the center is thus pronounced due to the presence of these spaces as well as the staff offices being consistently occupied. Hillel's presence is significantly more visible than almost every other faith community on campus. The next set of spaces, the ablution stations and the prayer room, represent a designated space for Muslim students, the next most visible group within Pasquerilla.

Ablution Stations and the Prayer Room



Figure 10. Muslim Prayer Room. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.



Figure 11. Ablution station for women. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.

Within the same southwest corridor of the Pasquerilla Center lies a small room, room 120, shown in Figures 10 and 11. Only about 300 square feet in size, the room has all the visible and architectural signs of being designed for only one purpose: prayer and meditation for the Muslim community. To find the room, students walk down the hallway from the main corridor. There they encounter a shoe rack outside of the door, as well as signs in Arabic and occasionally a Koran, perhaps left from a previous user. Entering the general annex of the room, there are male and female specific ablation stations, designed specifically for Muslim prayer preparation, in which individuals perform the ritual practices of washing, mostly feet. The space is a clear indication of Muslim presence within the space (observations April 18, 2019).

In the main room there are visible markers of the space's intended usage. Prayer mats are available from a corner shelf, an accordion style separation curtain is set up, mostly to

distinguish where men and women in the Muslim community are intended to pray, and the shelves may have Korans available. What sets the space apart as a Muslim prayer space is its orientation: the front wall has been angled so that when participants look or kneel directly facing forward, they will be facing directly toward Mecca, the holiest place in Islam and the location of the Kaaba (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012).

On a daily basis, Muslim-identifying individuals, especially students, will casually enter the Pasquerilla Center and head to this space. “There have been at least fifteen students who have come in during the last hour to use the prayer space. They all keep to themselves, but head directly to the room” (observation, April 21, 2019). Throughout the study, this was the space where it was most likely within the building to find Muslim identifying students. The students would naturally gravitate toward this, another segmentation of the building through behavioral tracing (Strange & Banning, 2001). When asked about keeping the space open for students to complete each of the five daily prayers, which start at sunrise and continue until sunset, staff remarked that “The center opens at 7:00 a.m. each day, so sometimes student do morning prayers in their room, but we are open until 11:00 p.m. each night of the week, so we know that we can meet their needs for evening prayer” (Participant SALLY).

Muslim Students, when asked about their usage of the space, repeatedly remarked about convenience of the center, but they also expressed that there “could/should be more spaces on campus” for when they were on other sides of campus (Participant, ALLISON) Students though remarked that they felt like they “belonged” and “could practice their Muslim prayer” openly in the center (Participant SARA). Some of the women would remark that the divider reminded them of their “status within the Muslim community” while others said it felt “very normal” (Participant LESLIE, STEVE). Personal observation of the space seemed to indicate the space

was adequate to house the Muslim community on campus. While there were moments during the day, specifically midday prayer, in which the space was a little crowded, there was never a waiting period for students to find space to pray.

The space itself was physically designed and outfitted (meaning that the ablution stations were present) specifically for the Muslim community, a hallmark of the commitment to create inclusive environments for the Muslim community on campus. Based on observation, those Muslim students on campus found the space to be a safe place to attend to their religious needs. For Friday prayers though, a very different location had to be employed: the Frizzell room.

Frizzell



Figure 12. Frizzell room. Photographed by Ben Wideman, August 2019.

The main lobby of the Pasquerilla Center has several rooms which are visible and within ear shot of the casual visitor to the building. But one room, the Frizzell room, is often missed as

it lies in the basement level of the Pasquerilla Center. Accessing the room requires use of either the elevator, found on the main lobby, or a set of stairs, along the north facing wall of the lobby area which is somewhat tucked away. Signage directing people to this room is relatively sparse, and it could be inferred that a casual visitor might not even know the space exists, if they were not visiting for the specific purpose of a program or activities in the room. “There are a lot of signs and visible markers for all these spaces, but almost no one goes down to Frizzell. I’m not sure people even know the room exists” (observation, April 17, 2019).

The Frizzell room is a large open space with high ceiling, not unlike that of the previously mentioned worship space. It can be divided with a built-in accordion wall divider into rooms “A” and “B” and in total encompasses nearly 3,000 feet of space. Its floor feels somewhat like that of a basketball arena, with wooden planks interlaced across a floor that is somewhat creaky. It is mostly used for yoga classes, public events, and the occasional campus lecture, but its most visible and consistent usage is for Friday prayers for the Muslim community.

Each Friday, even during the summer months, Muslim professionals, students, and community members alike begin to appear in the main lobby of the center beginning around 11:30 a.m. Signs will go up, placed by the university staff, directing individuals to the Frizzell room and Friday prayers. Around 12:30 p.m., the growing mass of individuals will descend the stairs off the main lobby and they will find their way to the room itself, which is at the bottom of the stairs in the basement. As you approach the space, shoes are strewn upon the floor in pairs and the small bathrooms in the basement level are typically full of individuals preparing themselves through foot washing in the sinks. This practice is something the staff remarked “we’re trying to mitigate,” (Participant SAM). Some of the people visit the ablution stations on the main floor, but others use the lower level sinks to complete their preparation.

On the floor in the Frizzell room, one finds a multitude of 6-foot or 8-foot prayer rugs, overlaying one another until there is enough space made for what can be upwards of 150 individuals at each of the two services (observation April 19, 2019). A podium with a microphone becomes the central focus of the service and prayer begins with the standard recitation. I observed during these services the men sitting near the front and the women sitting behind them, typically near the back in what was almost always a full room (observation, April 18, 2019).

Following Friday prayer, or Jummah, the same persons who have likely gathered in the lobby beforehand return to the same lobby, and for most of the afternoon there is a sizable group of Muslims, especially students, who simply hang out. Some remain in the lobby, finding chairs and tables to work from, others enter the garden room if it is available, and still others may head out for other appointments or commitments (observation April 19, 2019). But the space itself is a remarkable demonstration of the support for Muslim identities.

Students, when asked about the space, remarked a “sense of belonging” and that “we come to this space every week and it is where I meet my friends” (Participant SARA). Other students spoke of the convenience of having two services. “If I have class, I may have a hard time making it. I just come when I can each semester and appreciate being able to come when I am able” (Participant LESLIE). When asked about the space being on the lower floor and perhaps semi-invisible as compared with spaces like the worship hall, students seemed to hold little concern. “We like the space, and it is a great space for us to do Jummah in. Plus, we have the prayer space on the other side of the building already” (Participant, SARA).

The Frizzell room is a very versatile but perhaps underutilized space, as its main usage for Jummah prayer overshadows many of its other physical space design opportunities. Because

the space is mostly open and does not contain any religious relics which may influence who feels comfortable or uncomfortable in the space, the space could be used more by groups but would be improved immediately by better signage within the main lobby of the center. Its constructed environment by the Muslim community has helped to support a climate of inclusion for Muslim identities, but its lacking visibility makes the space an underutilized area for other groups. Large spaces in Frizzell are often used extensively though, including in the last of the most visible multipurpose rooms, the Memorial Lounge.

Memorial Lounge

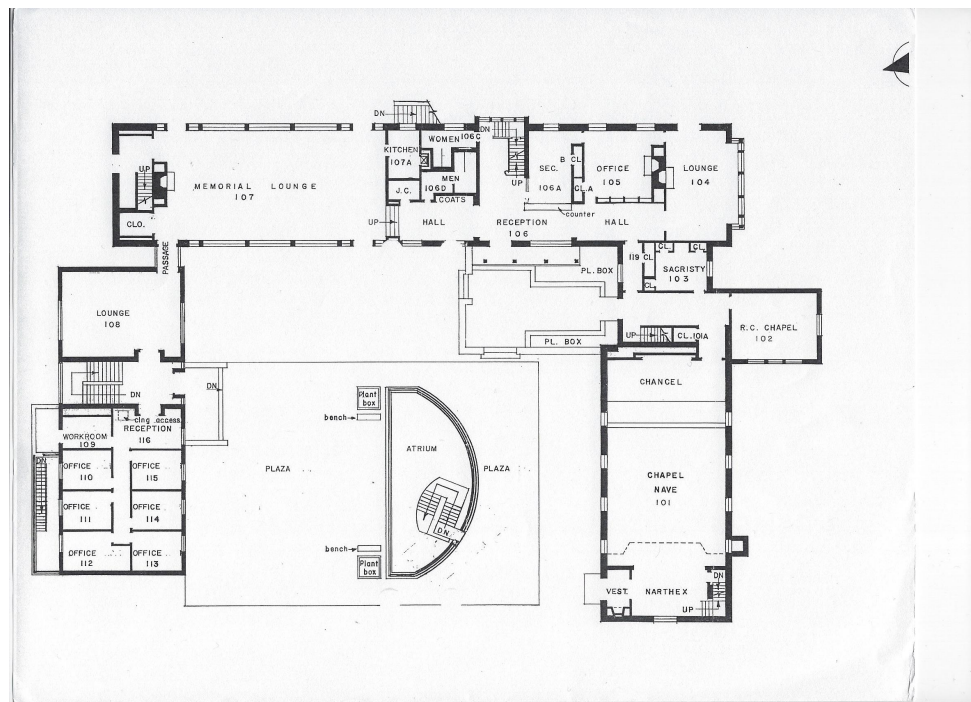


Figure 13. Enhanced view of north side of Pasquerilla Center. Obtained during document review April 2019.

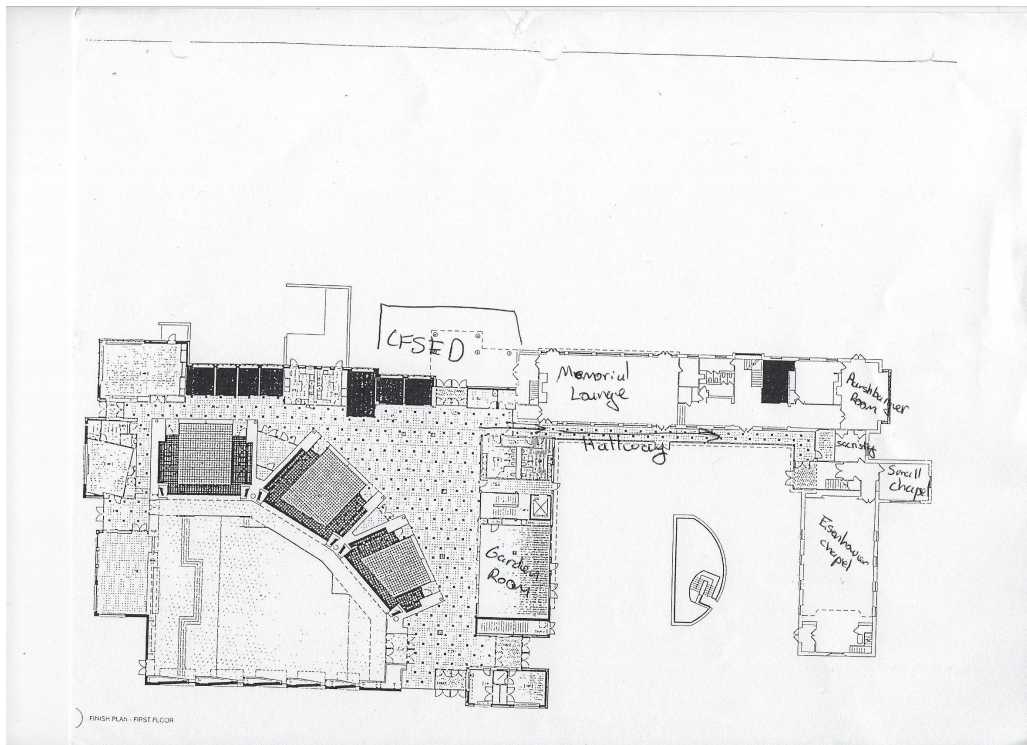


Figure 14: Details of Memorial Lounge and original building. Obtained during document review April 2019.

The study of the space next moved away from the 2003 expansion space into the rest of the building. Just off the main lobby, beginning down the hallway and corridor which leads to the Eisenhower Chapel, is the Memorial Lounge. This space is a 1,500 square foot room mainly filled with couches and comfortable chairs running along the walls as well as a piano for casual playing. This room and the other spaces down the coordinator are shown in Figures 13 and 14. The space includes a hanging canvas oil painting of Helen Eakin Eisenhower. Used by many from on and off campus, it is a heavily scheduled room, with events almost every day. This space is mostly used by outside groups.

In general, students can be seen in the space, mostly studying, on days when another event is not already taking place. The space is often quiet until mid-afternoon. Students will

occasionally eat lunch together in the space, sometimes alongside other campus professionals who are seeking somewhere other than their offices or simply away from the busyness of the campus. At other times, the space is used by students practicing piano or some of the many religious groups hosting informal gatherings in the space.

When asked about the use of the Memorial Lounge, students, some of whom had to be redirected as to which room I was referring, remarked that they didn't often use it for religious purposes, but sometimes had events in the space. Around 10 of the student participants talked about "studying" or "hanging out with friends" in the space. Staff remarked that the space is "in high demand" and that it is a way for the center to raise funds for other events and programs it holds with the financial support/scheduling provided by outside groups (Participant SAM). The Memorial Lounge is thus a room within the center that has multiple purposes; it serves as a versatile space for programming of a variety of religious and non-religious activities. This is similar to other rooms, including the Harshbarger room.

Harshbarger and other multi-use spaces

The Pasquerilla Center has nearly two dozen rooms which can be booked for events. Many of these are small rooms that are used by the religious communities for things like book studies, Bible studies, group planning meetings, and study sessions. These spaces are all important, and each group tends to use them based on the size of the event and the tradition of holding certain programs here. For example, one of the Lutheran-related campus ministers informally discussed using one of the many spaces for almost 15 years for their weekly Bible study. Another remarked that they had moved to a larger space as their events had grown and at times because the CFSED staff had made the request.

When groups get placed into these smaller rooms, it is almost always done by the staff of the Center. Looking at a complex network of space requests, the staff will “identify the best rooms for each event based on needs and especially the expected size of the group” (Participant KEITH). Occasionally, the groups are moved, but most bookings begin taking place in the summer prior to each academic year and are set for each semester by August and November, respectively. Overall, these spaces were rarely used by outside groups. Students, in interviews remarked that the ability to have events in these spaces “was really great” and were listed as a “reason for why I come to the center every week,” (Participant, MEGAN).

One particular room, the Harshbarger room, is essentially a board room with a standard setup, including board-room-style seating. The room, which was rarely used during my visit to the center and became the location of many of the in-person interviews I held with staff, is again used mostly during the year for religious groups for programming purposes. The space is occasionally booked by other departments and unit directors for meetings with staff. The space is unique among the center’s spaces because its design never changes, causing it to be used less frequently than many of the other spaces. Its usage is defined by those who want to have a formal setting, which some groups have found useful. Harshbarger sits at the end of the extended corridor that connects the Pasquerilla Center expansion and the original Eisenhower Chapel space together. On the floor above, where this study turns next, along the entire corridor of the second floor, are the offices for each of the religious, secular, and spiritual communities on campus.

The Upstairs Row of Offices

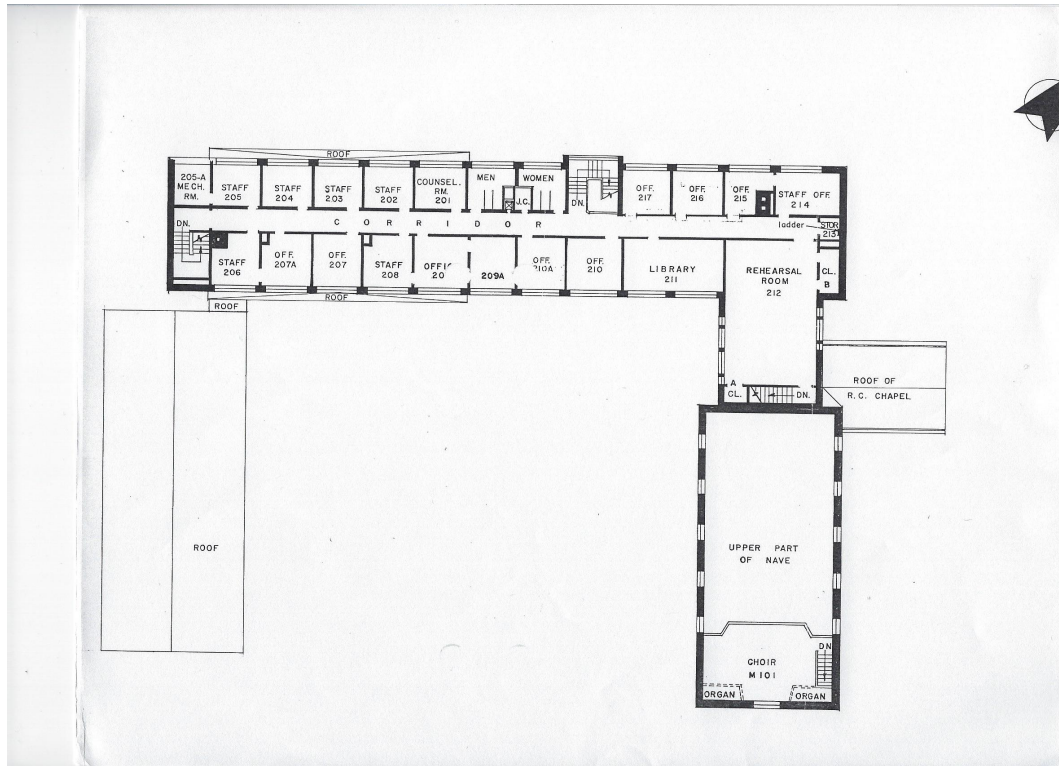


Figure 15. Upstairs architecture plans. Obtained during document review April 2019.

Up an elevator or a set of stairs from the Harshbarger room lies three areas of a corridor in which many of the religious life student groups have shared offices (see Figure 15). At one end lies the Catholic Newman Centre. Behind a closed office door there is a sizable space with four offices and an administrative assistant's desk in a lobby. This is the location in which all the on-campus priests and religious workers for the Catholic community operate. The space, which is admittedly tucked away, is rarely visited by those who are non-Catholic. This set up, in fact, begins to selectively determine what will be later discussed as a lack of intersection between religious groups within the center.

The area is actually two ends of a corridor, separated by a door between sections, and is lined with office spaces on both sides of a standard hallway. Each office has a closed door,

sometimes with a door window, and almost always with signage to identify its occupants. But the hallways are relatively unmarked, and in observations most groups keep their doors closed. Many staff remarked that they are in use only occasionally. But many of the more Evangelical Christian students felt as though these were the primary places to be on campus. “I come to the Center and hang out in the office. (Participant JONAH).

Catholic students also remarked that this corridor was a principal place they visited. “I stop by and see the Father (Priest) and then study in the space. Besides that, I come for Mass but that’s about it,” (Participant JEFF). Most Catholic students I talked with either informally, or formally in the focus group, did not seem to use the Pasquerilla Center’s spaces in general beyond this. It should be noted that the Catholic community maintains an off-campus parish where students also frequent depending on interest and the activities taking place.

Other offices within the second floor corridor are used but not nearly as frequently. Students were often observed walking into the center and going down the corridor to visit with campus religious staff. These students were most often the Evangelical Christians, who may be using the space, even though the rooms are rented out for the student groups to use. This differentiation between an office that is supposed to be for student use and the reality that many of the campus ministry staff turn it into an on-campus office was something that a few of the university staff remarked upon as being a unique challenge and perhaps one of the reasons why students do not use the space as frequently as one might expect. Should a casual visitor walk into the space and take a walk around, he or she may completely miss these spaces, as their second floor presence makes them less visible. “The lobby is so visible, but these other spaces just are so easily forgotten about. The second floor spaces do not even feel like a part of the building on some levels” (Observation, April 28, 2019). Additionally, signage for these spaces on the main

floor is mostly absent, thus individuals might have no idea of their existence. Even as a researcher, I had to remind myself of their presence and to visit them for observation.

The Eisenhower Chapel



Figure 16. Eisenhower Chapel from back entrance. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.

The Eisenhower Chapel space (see Figure 16), is the most clearly marked space within the completed Pasquerilla Center which demonstrates overt Christian privilege. The chapel is orientated east to west and is on the extreme north and northwest sides of the entire structure. If one enters from the outdoor patio area and makes an almost immediate left, they are confronted with a small chapel that until the summer of 2019 had permanent pews with kneelers for Roman Catholic Mass. The space design is of a typical Christian orientation, with an elevated stage, an

altar, and the presence of sacred Christian texts, including a Bible. Outside, the façade includes a metal cross, though relatively hidden, hanging upon the north end of the building.

The space is well known by students and staff alike, with almost every interviewee remarking of its presence. Yet, only Catholic and occasionally Protestant Christian individuals spoke of using it. Many students, especially the Jewish and Muslim identifying students during the focus groups, did not see a reason to use it or remarked that the space “was not for them.” No individual seemed particularly upset that the space existed, but three of the same students (JESSE, KRISTINE, SARA) remarked that in general there were a lot of spaces for Christian students and only a few for them.

The chapel space is at the furthest end of the center and is often an afterthought by many of the other groups within the center, including Hillel. In a review of documents, the chapel was, for the entire 2018-2019 year, never reserved by any non-Christian group. For almost every activity, it felt as though the chapel was simply an extension of the previously mentioned Catholic/Newman Center offices, even though it is available and could be easily used by Protestant and Jewish groups. The priests would host prayer and Mass in the Eisenhower Chapel but no one else used the space.

Similarly, the adjacent small chapel space, which was previously described, was only used by Catholic students. Many of those interviewed admitted to using this small chapel space for confession, prayer, and sometimes private meetings. The space in observation was almost always empty but embodied the spirit of a Catholic prayer and meditation space by use of artifacts (see Figure 17). Non-Catholic students did not mention this space as one they were prone to visit or even use.



Figure 17. Small chapel. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.

These spaces embody Strange and Banning's (2001) physical space model and tell a story of Christian students, especially Catholic students, finding many spaces in which they are welcome. The spaces themselves are very separated from the rest of the Pasquerilla Center. Whether done intentionally or simply because of design restrictions at the time of construction, the Eisenhower Chapel and the small prayer spaces cause the students to be heavily segmented within the Center. Catholic students are essentially hanging out on their own, down a long corridor and around a corner where non-Christians do not feel as if they can go. Thus, the climate might be welcoming for those Catholic students, but at the exclusion of other groups. And this begins to help us consider whether groups intersect with one another. This question, which will be discussed, was a significant part of the observation of the last major space: the lobby.



Figure 18. Lobby from south entrance with main seating area and CFSED in foreground.

Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.



Figure 19. CFSED main atrium. Photographed by J. Cody Nielsen April 2019.

Lobby Usage

Strange & Banning (2001) speak to the need to do a comprehensive review of all spaces within a building, even the walking paths that may lead people toward specific locations within a building. The lobby, where the Pasquerilla Center comes to life, is the most frequented of all spaces within the Center. Along with the obvious access that entrances and exits offer, the lobby itself has several areas which students often frequent for study or discussion. In the center of the lobby are three couches and two chairs arranged into a square with a coffee table in the center. The space includes ample location for students to meet, to gather before or after events (like the above-mentioned Friday prayers), and to simply be students. During Mass or campus events, visitors tend to gather in this location to rest or determine where they will be headed next. Additionally, against the walls are several nooks in which chairs are arranged in a variety of

ways for study or rest. During the typical afternoon, I observed on average four to five people at any one point hanging out in the lobby of the space holding conversations or studying (observation April 15, 2019).

Staff were quick to remark of the importance of these spaces. “Students seem to spend a lot of time in this space studying” (Participant DAN). Observations validated this, with certain students frequenting the spaces. “The lobby is constantly full of students who are simply hanging out on chairs studying. Maybe it’s because of finals season, but this has happened every time I visit” (observation, April 18, 2019). When asked about this, no students who were a part of the study remarked of using it on a normal basis, but three stated that “they could see themselves maybe using it” (field notes April 20, 2019). There is a chance that those students who frequently used the spaces for study were simply visiting the center because of its quiet atmosphere. The center appears to have a special place on campus in comparison to other spaces, even beyond its intentional focus on being a space of belonging for the religious communities. This leads toward a larger question of how the space is significant in comparison to the campus.

The Pasquerilla Center in Comparison to Penn State at Large

The Pasquerilla Center’s “Tower of Light” could easily make it stand out in comparison to other buildings on a public university campus. Because of this, it seems that there are few features of the building from the outside that would “tell” a campus visitor that this was a center for religious life, even its name, the “Frank and Sylvia Pasquerilla Center.”

Students are unlikely to learn of the center through anything but word of mouth or messaging by the university. Interviews with staff revealed mixed responses when it came to campus staff promoting the presence of the Center. “It depends on which students are giving orientation tours to prospective students as to whether or not they actually learn that we are on

campus. But the Center is not on the official university tour” (Participant SAM). Students remarked often of “knowing friends” or family members who attended Penn State and visited the center first through them (Participants SARA, KRISTINE). Others found the center during their campus tours and orientation and still more students had been introduced to campus religious staff during campus activity fairs (Participants MEGAN, JONAH, JESSE). There is no way to fully know how many students might know of the center and what percentage have ever visited the center.

For those that use the space, there is a clear indication that the Pasquerilla Center is a significant place on campus. Students and staff alike remarked on how the Pasquerilla Center is the “place to go” for religious life, (Elizabeth, JESSE, KRISTINE, STEVE). Additionally, Muslim students all agreed that it is “the safest place” on campus when asked about spending late nights at the center, which I observed on every visit and over several evenings (Participants SARA, ALLISON, STEVE). In comparison to other spaces on campus, which I casually visited during lunch breaks and walks around campus, nothing appears to have any real similarity to the Pasquerilla Center.

The types of spaces that the Pasquerilla Center houses may be a significant reason for its importance. The prayer spaces, the worship hall, and the Kosher kitchen especially appear to hold importance to Muslims, Christians, and Jews respectively, though support for Hindu, Atheist, and other groups could not be determined and could be somewhat lacking. While visiting during Passover, one of the most important Jewish holidays of the year, students frequently remarked of coming to the center “because the Kosher kitchen was available” (Participant SARAH, KENNETH). Hillel held several food-related events for students who were observing the traditional dietary restrictions during Passover. There were a higher than average

number of students from the Jewish community visiting during the first observation week, as stated by multiple staff. Free food and the push toward finals at the end of April could also be considered a reason for this number (Elizabeth, KEITH, MARY). Jewish participants did not speak to these as specific reasons for visiting the center, but observation of their activities in the center speak to these activities being a reason for some.

Pasquerilla Physical Support for Religious, Secular, and Spiritual (RSSI) diversity on Campus

Overall, the Pasquerilla Center appears to be a sort of magnet on campus for religious life, but only if individuals knew about the location. Upholding its mission and vision, the center fulfills its goals as stated on its website of “offer(ing) a welcoming, safe, inclusive environment,” and “aims to promote an environment of respect for religious and spiritual diversity” (Pasquerilla, n.d.). The fulfillment of this mission and vision though, at least through the consideration of the physical environment, appears to be isolated to only the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim identities. Spaces designed with intention for religious practice appear to perform as they were expected, while neutral meeting spaces may or may not produce a sense of genuine “belonging.” The Pasquerilla Center does support, at minimum, certain forms of religious identity.

The physical spaces of Pasquerilla are, at first review, simply a vessel for where the gathering of religious, secular, and spiritual groups at Penn State. The idea that Pasquerilla is the space for these groups to gather does not appear to promote their presence in general. For example, Hillel could choose to move off campus or a religious group could just choose not to affiliate on campus. In this way, the Pasquerilla Center in itself does not appear to have much influence to support a more “multifaith” agenda. Instead, the Center is there for groups that

already need space. And yet, the physical environment of the Center does promote a sense of belonging. How the physical environment does this is not yet fully able to be answered until the second question of the study is considered: What role might a CFSED play in the campus climate? This question is further discussed in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6: THE INFLUENCE OF THE CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL AND ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT UPON THE CAMPUS CLIMATE

If one is to assess campus climate, multiple analyses must be completed of a variety of institutional methods of engagement. These analyses include the physical environments of the campus, but also the ways in which the university is directly engaging in activities, procedures, and above all implementing policies which drive an overall ecosystem of the campus. In considering religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion, Strange and Banning's (2001) *Educating by Design* model also points to organizational environmental, aggregate environments, and constructed environments as the ways in which to evaluate and understand the campus climate. It is in using this tool that this chapter takes shape.

Penn State's Pasquerilla Center may be the largest multifaith center in the United States, but it would not be what it is without the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development (CFSED). Growing out of the chaplaincy that Penn State began in 1928, the CFSED has changed significantly over time. When the role of traditional, Christian chaplaincy was ended at Penn State, the Eisenhower Chapel still had a coordinator role connected with it, though the person was no longer responsible for aspects of religious practice (interview with participant SAM). When the Center was opened in 2003, the previous coordinator position was reimagined, with the position becoming a director for what, until 2016, was called the Center for Ethical and Religious Affairs (interview with participant SAM).

The current CFSED is an office of the Department of Student Affairs at Penn State University. Staff of the CFSED are all employed by the university and are not affiliated with any religious community on campus. Instead, they are administrators of the Pasquerilla Center and most hold degrees related to higher education. The Director of the Center reports to one of the

two associate vice presidents, who in turn reports to the vice president for student affairs. The center includes seven full time staff members, including an assistant director, administrative assistant, scheduler, two full-time night staff, and a program coordinator (interview with participant SAM). This group of professionals collectively help run the center, while also supporting a larger campus effort of religious life. Their daily work begins to answer the second question of this study: What role might a center for spiritual and ethical development play in the campus climate of the institution?

Organizational Environments

Strange and Banning (2001) consider physical environments as the first and perhaps most important area of their universal design framework for campus climate. Organizational environments of an institution also play a vital role in the campus climate. This reminder helps us understand the importance of how the CFSED played a role in the aggregate and constructed environments of the institution. To understand how the CFSED and its professional staff hold influence upon the climate first required an in-depth understanding of institutional organization and the Center's "relative location to power" (Strange & Banning, 2011).

Interviews with administration at Penn State uncovered the extent to which the CFSED held any influence upon campus, from the lens of the individuals who drive campus policy. Several interviews with associate vice presidents were conducted to consider how the CFSED impacted the larger campus. One particular participant summed up this understanding well. "(The Director) is very important on campus. We rely on them to provide us with information about how to provide support for students from a variety of religious identities. Furthermore, [the Director] plays an important role in our campus" (Participant GREG). This important role on campus appeared to be somewhat restricted to the efforts of religious, secular, and spiritual

identity though, with little understanding of the potential intersections with the greater campus climate. For example, when asked about the opportunity for the CFSED to be involved in things like Housing and Residential Life, Dining Hall Services, or Admissions and Recruitments, one CFSED staff noted that “We try to provide as many avenues as we can to help students know about religious life on campus” (Participant KATHERINE). When asked about how students come to know about the CFSED and the Pasquerilla Center, one Penn State administrator remarked that, “students are given information at orientation, the center is on the list of places where tours pass by, and students are introduced to the religious life groups within the first couple of weeks on campus,” (Participant ALEX). Beyond this, the opportunity to engage with many of the more prominent units on campus appeared to be limited.

Understanding how the center was included in conversations of significant institutional policies became more complex. “We’re at the table with the other Directors, but whether our voice is invited to certain policy discussions is another question” (Participant ELIZABETH). When asked about how they had influence, this staff member responded, “I have significant responsibility in the physical plant of the building. I can recommend and make changes to our building, but beyond that, there are questions about institutional policies at times,” (Participant SAM). Throughout the study, administrators backed up a sense of importance of the work of the center and the environment of the Pasquerilla Center. At the same time, these administrators often struggled to pinpoint how the CFSED staff were involved in decision-making on larger campus-wide concerns of religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

Another measurement of the organizational environments within institutions is the ways in which financial resources are allocated (Strange & Banning, 2001). When resources are allocated to a project, individuals are able to have agency over budgets. When units can attain

financial resources to achieve goals, power is created and the opportunity for change is present (Strange & Banning, 2001). Interviews with staff of the center were used to ascertain a greater understanding of this aspect of the organizational environment. In the case of the CFSED, the study revealed a significant dedication by the university to financially support religious life on campus. As one staff noted, “The staff of our center are fully paid for by the university through the office of Student Affairs. Our programming though comes from the cost of rentals, especially weddings, as well as our endowments” (Participant SAM). Staffing is paid for by the university, but as the participant stated, programming costs were a different experience. When asked to clarify, the same staff member stated, “We receive some support from the university, but the programming right now has to be focused on student activities that we can guarantee students can come to. We get to host staff and community events much less right now unless I do it on our endowment funds” (Participant SAM).

This commitment to the cost of staff, which includes a director and assistant director, is sizable for religious life and came as a surprise for me.

Secondary interviews and research revealed that the endowment is sizable, with the CFSED’s director able to work with the advancement/foundation office of Penn State to obtain funding to grow a number of permanent funds. One staff member of the CFSED remarked, “We are doing well with these funds, and our wedding revenue continues to come in well” (Participant KEITH). When considering Strange and Banning’s (2001) organizational environment framework, this aspect of the power of the CFSED appeared to be strong, with few signs that the financial power of the center was being threatened.

Strange and Banning (2001) questioned how organizational structures provide the opportunity (or not) for units and individuals to influence the campus climate. When key staff are

included in conversations, they hold the ability to be engaged in vital decision making regarding institutional policies and practices. When they are forced to insert themselves in conversation, or are called upon once decisions have been made, their power and influence is significantly limited (Strange & Banning, 2001). One way to evaluate this was to consider the ways in which Penn State supported dietary, prayer, and holiday accommodation needs of the religious, secular, and spiritual students. Looking at these areas became a way to consider how or if the CFSED held influence upon the campus climate.

Kosher and Halal Options

One of the significant ways universities can enact policies that help support the religious, secular, and spiritual identities of students is through the university's food options (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2008). In many ways, the dining centers and affiliate dining option stations in student unions and other centralized locations on campus are the most visible marker of a campus' commitment to these identities on campus (Nielsen & Small, 2019). It came as a surprise that in fact, Penn State only has one dining hall that offers Kosher and Halal options.

In interviews with staff and administration, the needs for Kosher options was discussed repeatedly. It appeared that because there is a Kosher kitchen on campus, the argument to place Kosher options around the campus in dining centers had been somewhat stymied. One staff of the CFSED remarked, "We've tried to have this conversation with the administration, but it's still an uphill battle" (Participant SAM). Multiple administrators spoke of competing priorities and lack of funding beyond the Kosher kitchen at the Pasquerilla Center. "This is just an area we need to do more work on. Though, as you know, there are a lot of things that we need to keep working on" (Participant ALEX). Another administrator, when asked directly about whether the university was going to add more options to support the Jewish population on campus responded,

“We are trying to support our students with more and more needs. There is a dining hall renovation and we are considering how to potentially do this, but it is not going to happen campus wide” (Participant MARY). None of the administrators interviewed outside of the CFSED could pinpoint how they were willing to work with the CFSED staff to make these dietary needs available. The university may eventually decide to respond, but the CFSED appears limited in its ability to change the current situation on campus, despite attempts over the past several years. There is some movement regarding prayer spaces, a second major consideration of religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

Prayer Spaces Outside of the Pasquerilla Center

In recent years, visibility of the Muslim community has become more present on campuses in the United States (Schmalzbauer, 2019). One staff member remarked, “The international student enrollment at Penn State is significantly up. Because of that, we are seeing more and more students at Jummah (Friday prayers). As many as 400” (Participant JONAH). This growth has allowed for administrators interviewed to consider the need for more spaces on campus. The staff of the CFSED has been a significant player on this effort on campus.

The efforts to expand prayer spaces are not just within the Pasquerilla Center, but throughout campus. “The Muslim Student Association came to us and asked for more prayer spaces, including in the student union. One staff of the CFSED stated that “We took it to (administration) and they have been considering it” (Participant SAM). During the visit, it was determined that the medical school, which has a campus about two miles away from the central campus, has installed a prayer space. Visits to the space did not occur as it is outside of the scope of this study, and the staff for the CFSED did not have a role in its creation. On the central campus, the staff have been helping to develop prayer spaces in the student union as well as in

several residence halls. One administrator interviewed stated, “We’re looking at a new space in the student union that (the Director) has come to us about” (Participant ALEX). Additionally, one CFSED staff member stated “The Director of Housing and Residential Life has come to me asking about prayer spaces in some of the spaces. We’re working on that with them” (Participant ALEX). Upon completion of this study, none of these had yet been completed. Muslim students, when asked, discussed praying “in their rooms” and in “the library” (interviews with participants SARA, ALLISON, STEVE). This appears to be a policy and practice at Penn State that the CFSED does have some influence over, as their efforts appear to be having some influence upon the campus. Yet, further progress is still needed. One more area to consider is how campus professionals and students are trained regarding religious, secular, and spiritual identities and concerns. This topic was also considered as part of the study.

Professional Training for Staff and Students

Throughout the Penn State community, active engagement around issues of racial and gender diversity was present. Several staff members I interviewed were from the Diversity and Inclusion offices that were all outside the Pasquerilla Center. Each of them spoke of opportunities to provide training to staff and described being present and participating at student orientations. Based on these conversations, it felt natural to assume that the CFSED were also involved in similar professional trainings, such as those taking place during orientation or in trainings which were required for students. Unfortunately, the training for staff appeared to be few and far between. Most of the staff members are mostly focused on the internal workings of the center and those who are involved in outside activities have rarely been invited by units and offices to speak; connections to the faculty are especially rare. Additionally, the CFSED received minimal attention at student orientation, as the staff mentioned that “We might get 5-10 minutes

at the parent orientation” (Participant SAM). Outside of that, there was little to no mention of opportunities to explore religious and spiritual life until the students were on campus.

In each of these practice areas, which might be routine considerations for many other diversity groups on campus, the CFSED held little influence. In fact, despite the repeated sense of appreciation by administrators of the work of the center and its staff, there was little effort made to include the center in the larger efforts of the campus. It appeared that the presence of the CFSED may have prevented the rest of the campus from feeling responsible for or making efforts to provide accommodations for students, something which will be taken up in the discussion portion of this study.

It is possible that the dynamics of a center such as that of the CFSED at Penn State can produce a result in which a large portion of the campus fails to address religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion, by relying instead on the efforts of a few staff members and a healthy budget. If this is the result of such a center, then questions exist about the power the center wields in connection to the larger campus. This points to an affirmation of what students mentioned in interviews of feeling as though the center was the place they felt safe and belonged. The juxtaposition of the feelings of safety expressed by students and the fact that the religious, secular, and spiritual life of Penn State is somewhat isolated to the Pasquerilla Center is a central feature of Strange and Banning’s research (2001) in the aggregated and constructed environment tenets.

There appeared throughout the study to be a significant difference in how the CFSED as an organizational environment was able to influence the campus. In the previous examples, it is clear that its ability to affect the larger campus has been mixed, with some results and progress toward institutional practices and policies that are more inclusive of religious, secular, and

spiritual identities. The center still faces some resistance to additional inclusion policies and initiatives from campus administration. Inside the Pasquerilla Center, where the CFSED is housed, the ability to influence was significant. This makes sense, as the participants and audience in the center are natural collaborators to the project.

Pasquerilla Center Policies and Practices

The physical spaces of the Pasquerilla Center have influence upon the religious identities of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian students' sense of belonging on campus, but mostly within the Pasquerilla Center itself. The spaces, designed for activities related to religious practice and community gathering, are able to provide a space on campus for students to gather. In order to make the spaces efficient and effective requires more intentional efforts and opportunities by those who are able to influence the campus experience. The ability to influence how the spaces are designed, maintained, and updated is a significant part of the center's role, and throughout the research this was found to have impact on the climate. This analysis begins by reflecting upon a remarkable finding of the study: how the Center supports the Jewish community's Shabbat practices.

Maintaining Shabbat Practices within the Center

Shabbat is one of the most visible practices of the Jewish community across the world. Taking place from sundown on Friday evening to sundown on Saturday evening, practicing Jews often refrain from work, including physical labor, electronic usage, and for some even driving, as a means to practice a tradition that is now well over 3,000 years old (Hillel, n.d.). While every Jew practices their tradition in different ways, Orthodox Jews, who were largely found to attend the Chabad at Penn State, often seek to practice the Sabbath in more traditional ways. In order to accommodate these students, measures must be considered by the institution.

The CFSED at Penn State supported Shabbat practices in a number of ways. In an extensive interview with one participant particularly involved in administrative oversight of the Pasquerilla Center and the CFSED, it was revealed just how much effort was being put into the support for Shabbat.

We have a couple spaces where Chabad has office space, so for those offices, we worked with the Office of Physical Plan to make sure that the light switches in there remain manual switches where all of the other ones or occupation ones would sense ... turn the lights on automatically when you went in and shut them off if there was no movement for a certain time period. But we knew that, for our more conservative or orthodox Jewish community, that on many days throughout their year on different holidays, that this would be unacceptable for them to go in and cause that to happen. So we worked with them, and it wasn't just upstairs. It was on a room like the garden room, where Chabad uses that for their high holiday services, and there was also on a sensor. So we had them switch that out so that the lights could be turned on manually (Participant SAM).

It became apparent that the Center's staff were extremely well versed in the needs of the Jewish community. Taking this a step further, I asked about the use of spaces for Saturdays in which there were events that the Jewish community held, and especially the holidays in which Shabbat practices were also observed like Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. "If the community has an event in one of the rooms, our staff will go and turn on the lights for them before the event happens," (Participant SAM). The staff remarked repeatedly of this being standard practice and acknowledged that "We always keep the Jewish community in mind" (cite this quote). This attention to detail was both unique and unexpected in the study.

Almost every aspect of the Pasquerilla Center appeared to be affected by the presence of the Jewish community. One participant noted the attention to detail that has become a mark of the Pasquerilla Center.

When they built the Spiritual Center, they put in sinks that have faucets that are, again, sensor so that the water turns on and off automatically, urinals, toilets flush automatically. And we made sure that, when they did some changes and replaced some of the plumbing in our older restrooms, that they kept those. The sinks are manual, the toilets are manual, everything (Participant SAM).

The practices that the participant spoke about refers back to the needs of the Jewish community to avoid any form of “work” during Shabbat (Hillel, n.d.). Because any activity that involves effort on the part of the individual can be considered a violation of Shabbat Law, including motion causing a faucet or a light to turn on, these adjustments to the Pasquerilla Center were necessary. Knowing and upholding practices of this sort required a level of awareness, sensitivity, and especially relationship-building that is largely absent from other efforts that appear to be taking place on campuses across North America (Nielsen & Small, 2019).

In the practices that the CFSED has put into place throughout the Pasquerilla Center, the CFSED demonstrated its ability to affect the campus experiences for Jewish students, albeit only within the Pasquerilla Center. A second area of concern came from the need to overcome what had been a heavily Christian influence upon the history of the Center. The creation of the Pasquerilla Center as a multifaith space itself was a practice done to counteract the historical Christian influence in the form of the Eisenhower Chapel. Still, many practices are required to this day to provide a more holistic sense of welcome for all religious, secular, and spiritual

identities. This includes overcoming the Christian influence that could potentially dominate the campus due to the large percentage of Christian groups within the Center.

Overcoming Christian Influence Within the Center

The Pasquerilla Center was begun first as a chapel space with the construction of the Eisenhower Chapel. In addition, Christianity dominates both American culture and campus culture; more than 75% of the religious groups affiliated with the center are Christian. As such several Christian identity markers influence the center space. This includes an outdoor cross that hangs off the northwest side of the building and outside the Eisenhower Chapel. From the outside, there are enough trees in the way that unless one is looking for it, he or she would be likely to miss it. Yet, once it has been noticed, it is hard to miss.

This presents a special case of sensitivity for the many groups that affiliate with the Pasquerilla Center (interviews with participant SAM). Particularly for the Jewish community, but potentially for other communities as well, the Christian cross as a symbol can be a mark of colonialism, oppression, and certainly of Christian hegemony (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). No groups are ever forced to use spaces like the chapel venue. One director did remark that the Muslim students used to have Friday Jumma in one of the three pods (Participant ELIZABETH). On the second floor, one specific room does still maintain a view of the cross out the window, and because of this, the scheduler typically will not force non-Christian groups to use the room (Participant ELIZABETH). “We are sure to tell the students if the room might have views of symbols that could potentially be offensive when they are reserving them” (Participant ROSE).

This level of awareness again points to the work of religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion that can only occur when policies and practices are considered, and an Office for Religious and Ethical Affairs has responsibility, insight, and oversight of spaces such as the Pasquerilla Center.

Not all Christian practices are as potentially offensive, but rather simply require accommodation that are outside of the university and the physical plant's standard operating procedures. In one such case, this included the use of incense by certain Christian groups for their worship. To meet their needs and to prevent the incense from simply drifting about the hallways, potentially causing others to have allergic reactions or simply irritations due to the intense smells, the CFSED specifically made sure that there were programmable rooms in which windows were able to be opened or closed. This was not a practice that was considered in the original plans for the update to the second floor and the few program rooms. What was even more notable than the continued attention to detail was the responses from the physical plant staff.

We worked with them, and they did what they normally don't do, and they found ways to take some of the funds for the windows that were energy-committed dollars, put them in different parts of the building, and make more energy-efficient so that they could spend the general contract money on the windows so that they could give us operable windows" (Participant SAM).

This respect between the center's staff and the physical plant was shown repeatedly to be an act of rapport building that is unlikely to have taken place without diligence and intention of CFSED staff. Having considered this, the study also considered how the opinions of students who frequent the Center played an influence in the policies and practices of the Center.

Giving Voice to the Students

The work of policy and practice implementation is an act that involves hearing the needs of students and responding. The CFSED sought to combat that by having an interfaith committee for those who participated in the life of the Pasquerilla Center to allow them to bring their concerns and as wisdom around what needed to change in order to make the building more welcoming for themselves and their peers.

One of the key examples of this was when the Muslim Student Association (MSA) sought to make changes to the prayer space at the Pasquerilla Center.

There was...a portable divider that you could wheel in for separation between the males and the females. It made sense to... put what up a floor-to-ceiling hospital-style curtain, on a track that we can open and close. That way, if we need to use the room for anything else, we can just push that curtain up against the wall. But it's there, it's easy to use (Participant SAM).

This need was brought to the attention of CFSED by the MSA through the interfaith committee, after which the appropriate changes were made.

This feedback also involved more sensitive issues as well. One student stated, "When we got curtains for the ablution areas, we wanted to make sure they weren't see-through, even to the point of shadows, so that if women are in their ablution area, their shadow isn't showing through to the outside, and men can see that" (Participant KEITH). In this case, the students, who had long since graduated at the time of this study, had appealed to the same interfaith committee and brought to the attention of the staff an issue that was significant for the women of the Muslim community as one staff of the CFSED stated (Participant SAM). The center staff, with agency and responsibility to care for their own spaces, were quick to respond and replaced the space.

“We worked with the students to make sure that what was needed was purchased and installed as quickly as we could” (Participant SAM). Unlike so many other locations on campus which may have required negotiating with other units, the center’s staff were able to simply go and get the material to fix the concern.

These kinds of actions paid off and students were very eager to share their appreciation. One student stated, “We know they appreciate a lot of the changes because, when we make the changes, they stop by the desk, and they tell us how much they appreciate it” (Participant MARY). This was backed up by the student experience. “[The CFSED staff] often ask us what we need. We tell them honestly what would help, and they are usually good to respond. I know several things I mentioned to them that they later made sure were taken care of” (Participant ALLISON). This highlighted an important aspect of the practices of the Pasquerilla Center: the strong relationships between the staff and the students. Those experiences were critical toward creating a climate within the Center where persons feel welcome. Not all aspects of the climate of the center are determined by policies and directed practices, but sometimes through the creation of a practice that can affect the culture in very interesting ways.

The CFSED appeared to be mixed in its overall organizational power. Outside of the Pasquerilla Center, the influence and ability to make significant change was and remains very mixed. Inside the center, the ability to make change is easier, especially with the support of students. This points to a climate of inclusion, but only within the Pasquerilla Center itself. Looking further, there are questions of how the aggregate environment and constructed environments at Penn State have been influenced by the CFSED.

Aggregate Environments

For Strange and Banning (2001), there is an understanding that the campus is a collection of spaces that are occupied by different types individuals. Certain types of individuals might be more likely to gather in one space versus another. This has played out for extended periods of times in certain STEM fields like engineering in which women have historically struggled to find their place in a male dominated field (Strange & Banning, 2001). The aggregate, or who is mostly likely to be in the space, forms a homogenized environment that can be understood as both an opportunity and a challenge (Strange & Banning, 2001). The challenge is how to create what they described as “undifferentiated environments” throughout a campus in which multiple sets of identifying persons and “tribes” can feel welcome. This phenomenon on campus is explored using Strange and Banning’s (2001) “aggregate environment” lens.

In considering the policies and practices at Penn State, there is a clear practice and unwritten policy that the proper environment for many of the religious communities and students is the Pasquerilla Center. Throughout the study, it appeared that Jewish and Muslim communities felt included and welcomed within the building. The Muslim, Jewish, and Christian communities on campus were most visible and prominent within the center itself and less so as I explored campus, at least in large groups.

The homogenized environment of the Pasquerilla Center as the place for religious, secular, and spiritual identities to come together was unclear. While Jewish, Muslim, and Christian students may come together, other traditions remained absent throughout the study. Students routinely stated that they would come study late at night, would meet their friends, and would come “just to hang out” (Participant ALLISON). “We find this place to be where we can feel comfortable to hang out with friends, study, and simply be together” (Participant STEVE).

Other students stated, “Because all my friends come and hang out, it’s just normal for me to spend a lot of late nights here in Pasquerilla” (Participant SARAH). This gave the students from some traditionally marginalized religious communities a place to be, similar to other centers on campus that have provided space for Black students or for the LGBTQIA community. “I feel safe when I come here and hang out. It just feels different” (Participant SARA). The safe environment, as students stated, was the gathering place at Penn State for these religious identities.

Beyond the safe environment of the center though, may be a sense of general apathy by the rest of the campus. Jewish and Muslim participants repeatedly stated they felt like their identities were not welcome on campus, speaking about the lack of dietary options, the challenges of gaining accommodations around their academic needs in relation to religious holidays, and a general belief that staff and administrators did not value this area of their identity. “Everyone tries to care, but the [CFSED] staff just want to be there to support us. I can’t imagine not having them here and where else I would go on campus” (Participant ROSE). Another student said “There’s no one else on campus that really helps me know that my religious identity is important. At least not nearly as much as the staff of the Center” (Participant KENNETH). This segmentation of campus into places where faith traditions were welcome versus where they were not illustrated the aggregate environment tenant of Strange and Banning’s framework (2001). This requires that the Pasquerilla Center become a place for helping to influence the entire campus climate and helping to change minds regarding religious, secular, and spiritual identity on campus. This is also why the center and the CFSED staff were working to provide a space for all religious students.

Making the Center a Home for Everyone

To make a campus climate that is inclusive of religious, secular, and spiritual identities requires more than simply supporting those who are religious. Instead, there is an underlying opportunity to educate and dismantle biases that many students and community members may hold about religious life by offering all individuals a place in which to gather, even if that is a multifaith center. It is in the practice of hospitality that the CFSed was able to begin this process.

The Pasquerilla Center itself has become a place to gather at Penn State. It is intentionally set up that way. “I saw the spaces and how they were unused and I said, why don’t we invite students to come and study, to hang out here” (Participant SAM). This was the beginnings of a much larger push that some staff may not even recognize is happening. They are helping to change the climate and appreciative attitudes of those who are not part of any religious or secular community by helping to welcome others in to see the diversity of the student body on campus. But as is clear from this quote from a staff member, this is a not as universally welcomed as one might suspect and has taken dedicated efforts.

I got some pushback from many of the religious advisors at the time because they felt that this place should be used strictly for religious events and that they were concerned I was trying to make it a student center. My response was, “Yeah, I am trying to make it a student center. This is a place where we should have students coming here for things of all types, and that could be for lunch. That could be for studying. It could be for obviously the different services” (Participant SAM).

In the work of the CFSed, I started to notice that staff had implemented ways to help the larger campus to see the value of religious diversity by helping to bring members of the campus

community who were not part of a religious community into a center they normally would not frequent. By drawing individuals inside the building for general reasons, they were intentionally exposing them to religious, secular, and spiritual diversity and trying to help build a climate of inclusion.

These effort also included small additions to the lobby area that sought to add to the draw for students who might not traditionally visit a multifaith center. “We added stuff like even microwaves for students to use, which a lot of times, people come in here because they can’t just find a microwave anywhere on campus. So just those common things that says it’s almost like a second home for me have made a huge difference” (Participant SAM).

This statement by one of the CFSED’s staff and the ensuing observations demonstrate that indeed outside students were coming to the center during the lunch hour mainly to heat up their lunch. “I have been watching most of the last two hours (11-1) and people just stop by to heat up their lunch and then go off and eat in the corner before leaving” (observation, April 20, 2019). The students would often stop by, prepare their lunch or a snack, and would eat and then depart the center. In observations, these students rarely interacted with others, but clearly had knowledge of the microwaves. In this way, the goals of welcoming those who are not obviously there for religious, secular, or spiritual practice or community was at minimum beginning to show promise.

All formal interviews with students were with those who frequently used the center, thus this study does not include direct information from those students who just stopped by or were infrequent users of the center and unaffiliated with a religious community. However, in informal moments I was able to ask a few of those who had been sitting around for a while about why they were coming to center. Their responses ranged from the center was “on their way” to “it is a

good place to get studying done without distraction” (observation, April 21, 2019). In general, those that came to the center appeared to appreciate the space.

Returning to the question of whether the CFSED can influence campus policies and practices that affect the campus climate, the aggregate environment framework is aligned with the locations on campus where influence was highest. In the study, the CFSED held significant ability to influence culture within the center. Outside of the center, in the many other spaces on campus, the campus appeared to be what is known as undifferentiated, meaning the other spaces were not natural gravitation points for students. Because the study was limited to understanding how the CFSED influenced the campus through policies and practice, no formal interviews outside of the center were held to reinforce the student perspectives.

The aggregate environment of the Pasquerilla Center appears to be influenced by the CFSED, and thus is an aspect of the campus climate that supported religious, secular, and spiritual identities. But the final aspect of Strange and Banning’s (2001) theoretical framework offers a potential insight into an overarching question related to this question of campus climate and the influence of the CFSED: can the center influence the larger culture of the campus itself, or what Strange and Banning describe as the “constructed environment?”

Constructed Environments

Strange and Banning’s (2001) framework for understanding campus climate includes a final analysis, what is known as the “constructed environmental” factor. In this tenet of understanding the climate, it is the culture that is important to evaluate and understand. This can include the ways in which individuals feel like they fit in to the larger climate as well as the ways in which perceptions of the identities in question are welcomed on campus.

Looking at this tenet of the campus climate begins with an important conversation that came up during the research: the hiring factor.

The People You Hire

“Who you hire makes a big difference” (Participant MARY). These are the words of a staff member interviewed throughout the study. “We want to have those we bring into the center to have a keen awareness and insight into the religious experiences happening here at Penn State” (Participant SAM). The CFSED has autonomy to hire staff they deem appropriate for the roles they are creating or seeking to fill. Outside of the director’s role, which has not turned over since 2005, the staff are hired by the director. This position has the ability to review applicants with human resources and ultimately to decide who they will bring to campus for each position. And with that power comes the ability to help influence a culture within the Pasquerilla Center, and hopefully to create inroads across campus.

Students in the study reflected on the staff of the CFSED and their importance. When asked about the CFSED staff, one student noted “It’s always great to have (staff member) available in the center to talk with” (Participant STEVE). Another student responded, “I get so used to having (staff member) in the office. Their door is always open” (Participant RAY). Yet another student, when discussing the ways in the which they feel the staff supports their college experience remarked, “(Staff member) really wants to know what’s happening in our lives and is available when we want to stop by” (Participant KRISTINE). The student participants remarked and at times even heavily emphasized the presence of the CFSED and its staff as being a key indicator of their sense of belonging.

Understanding the keys to personal and professional skills for the center were beyond the scope of the study. Throughout the study, however, attention to details and general knowledge of

religious, secular, and spiritual identities among center staff, as well as curiosity were common. Conversations between the center's staff and the students demonstrated informally the importance of care and concern for the dynamic and changing needs of students across many religious identities. In addition to interviews with and affirmations about the attention by staff within the center, it is clear that the agency of the director in hiring is key to the success of this center. Additionally, the practice of hiring effective staff may be key in promoting a campus climate that is inclusive of all religious, secular, and spiritual identities. Another key factor that helped to evaluate the constructed environment on campus involved the proselytizing policies and practices the campus allowed and outlined.

Proselytizing on Campus

In understanding the campus culture of religious, secular, and spiritual identities, the study sought to explore the culture that is typical regarding proselytizing on campus. As is typical with more Evangelical Christian students, the practice of proselytizing, or the attempt or action to convert someone from one religion or belief to another, is a standard practice. No direct observation of this took place, but in interviews, staff noted that “we often get four to five preachers a year who come onto campus” (Participant SALLY). The Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development's policies and practices regarding this area of religious practice offered an opportunity to examine a campus culture of religious tolerance.

Proselytizing on campus is one of the most complicated aspects of religious, secular, and spiritual engagement. Much like previous studies examining how Evangelical Christian students felt marginalized on campus (Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2017; Schmalzbauer 2013), Evangelical Christian participants in this study felt as though their viewpoints were “less valued” than other students on campus. Many Evangelical Christian students spoke about “helping people find

Jesus” as a part of their beliefs and practices. Yet, on campus, the CFSED had developed and implemented policies and practices in conjunction with residence life staff in which residence halls were off-limits to these practices. This included policies in which RAs were forbidden from attempting to influence students to attend particular religious communities’ events. Evangelical students interviewed did not pinpoint this as a specific aspect of why they felt “less valued” but similar policies have been referred to in other studies (Schmalzbauer, 2013).

If a campus is to be a welcoming place, with a campus climate that is inclusive of religious, secular, and spiritual identities, its policies must align with that of helping students to feel safe in their practices. But as studies have shown, these practices often come into conflict with one another. At Penn State, this was true as well, even while there were attempts by the staff from the Pasquerilla Center to find a way to accommodate all identities. Religious, secular, and spiritual identities, in their complexity, do not always provide a space for all practices to be protected equally, especially this one specific practice. There is one final practice that helped to promote a culture of inclusivity for all individuals within the Pasquerilla Center that while slightly surprising, uniquely helped to support the connection of religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

Cultural Practice -- The Leftover Food Counter

The Pasquerilla Center is full of spaces that are well-curated to support differing forms of religious, secular, and spiritual practice. The manicured spaces help to support Shabbat, Muslim prayer, and so many other things. But college gatherings are often defined by a single item which brings students together: free food. And the Pasquerilla Center’s practice of handling free food appeared to influence the campus climate in far and wide reaching ways.

While visiting the center, I noticed early on that the communities started dropping off leftovers from events on a countertop at the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development in the atrium of the Pasquerilla Center. “I noticed today that there has been several times in which food is just dropped off. I asked the staff only to learn that people just do that all the time here. And then that students just know to come and eat it” (observation, April 24, 2019). Sometimes, it was a small plate of leftover cookies or other dessert. Sometimes though, entire events ended with substantial leftovers and even staff and students would stop by the center’s office and ask about leaving the food. Every time, within an hour or two, all the food was gone. The food became a sort of cultural experience, one in which a community would leave food, that would in turn provide food for another group. Sometimes it was Hillel leaving food after an event, including Kosher compliant food; another time it was a French studies awards banquet that had leftover catering. For the most part, the center’s staff allowed for the food to be left. It was always eaten.

What is more, the students who came knew of the food counter space. “I can always count on stopping by and there will be something for me to snack on. I love it” (Participant SARAH). Staff members remarked that it is has been happening as long as they have known, predating many of their tenures at the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development. Despite its unknown origins, it is a hit with students and staff alike. “We can always expect something to show up. Luckily, most people don’t leave us stuff we have to turn away” (Participant ELIZABETH). The CFSED has to uphold to certain food regulations, but many of the staff acknowledge that “we kind of run this place ourselves and can do this if we want to” (Participant ROSE). This unique dining service opened up an opportunity that revealed itself in the study and proved to be critical to getting students to spend unscheduled time in the Pasquerilla Center.

Bringing it all together

The CFSED at Penn State is an important unit of the Office for Student Affairs at Penn State. Its support of religious, secular, and spiritual identities on campus is making an impact upon the campus climate of Penn State, though its main influence is within the spaces of the Pasquerilla Center itself. Outside of the Pasquerilla Center, its attempts to affect the environment appear to be limited. Strange and Banning's (2001) *Educating by Design* model was highlighted in this analysis to demonstrate how the organizational environment, aggregate environment, and constructed environment were being influenced by the CFSED. In considering these areas, organizational power was limited, with the Pasquerilla Center being the location in which the most influence could take place. Campus-wide, the CFSED held less power to foster a campus climate, even though certain policies and practices were slowly but surely being implemented. Using the aggregate environment lens, the Pasquerilla Center was determined to be the main area where religious, secular, and spiritual communities could feel welcome and gather. Finally, the constructed environment lens highlighted a campus climate in which the hiring processes as well as the policies and practices of proselytizing played an important on fostering a campus-wide climate that could be supportive for religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

Understanding the physical spaces of the Pasquerilla Center and the policies and practices the CFSED has the ability to create and uphold in relation to the campus climate were extremely helpful in understanding Penn State's campus climate. To seek to uncover a final aspect of campus climate, the study included an analysis of the student experience of all aspects of the campus climate in relation to these two areas of inquiry. This is where the final chapter of results are considered.

CHAPTER 7: THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The campus climate of Penn State is ultimately a measure that can only be understood from the student experience. Because religious, secular, and spiritual identities are often invisible and their needs have traditionally been marginalized (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012) the need to engage with students using the Pasquerilla Center was a central feature of the study. The third and final question of the study was: How does the campus climate affect the experiences among religious, secular, and spiritually affiliated students connected to the Pasquerilla Center? This question sought to explore the experiences of the students in relation to the physical spaces and the institutional policies and practices that have been previously explored in the previous two chapters of the study.

This question of the study was largely designed to be answered using focus groups and individual interviews of students. Each set of students who contributed: Catholics, Jews, Muslims, and a mixture of Evangelical and Protestant Christians offered insights into the complex campus climate and how faith communities were individually and collectively affected. Participants drew from a variety of experiences, but ultimately all sensed at some level feelings of belonging with the Pasquerilla Center and yet marginalization across campus. A final factor which must be considered is the perspective that is missing from a specific set of participants, Hindu and Atheist students, who were not included in the study for lack of visible presence in the Center. These missing perspectives may speak to a larger question of how inclusive the campus climate is both within and outside of the Pasquerilla Center. This chapter first outlines a brief overview of the student participants, then takes a more in-depth look at several concerns of student perceptions of marginalization around campus.

The chapter additionally looks at the student sense of belonging within the center, and finally, summarizes the experiences of religious, secular, and spiritual identifying students at Penn State.

An Overview of the Participants

Catholic Students

The Newman Center at Penn State, with offices on the second floor of the Pasquerilla Center, was the most likely place to find a Catholic students on campus. That location, and any of the Catholic Masses which took place during the week, on Saturday evening, or both on Sunday mornings and evenings were the locations of this study. The Newman Center also has offices off campus at the local Catholic parish, but I did not visit this location as the research was constrained only to the campus itself. The Catholic community on campus is extensive, with as many as 2,000 students attending Mass on a weekly basis. Needless to say, almost all Catholic identifying students on campus likely have been in the Pasquerilla Center at some point during their time at Penn State.

The group of five Catholic students who participated in the study included three males and two females, all of whom were sophomores or juniors. A 90-minute focus group was conducted, along with a follow-up interview with one female student. These interactions were the principal source of data. In understanding the experiences of Catholic students on campus, several variables were revealed: the challenges of their pro-life beliefs and the tensions within the Catholic community, their practice as being mostly tied to Mass and their community, and in general, finding a welcoming presence on campus.

The Jewish/ Hillel Community

Judaism in America is made up of three general segments of individuals: Reformed, Conservative, and Orthodox. While not all-inclusive, these three areas, which progressively

become more conservative in the above order, are the heart of the Jewish community in America (Hillel, n.d.). Hillel International, the largest Jewish organization in the world, has a chapter at Penn State that is located within the Pasquerilla Center. This group mostly includes students who identify as Reformed or Conservative. Orthodox Jews at Penn State tended to affiliate with the Chabad community. This is a much smaller community on campus that while staffed with a full time Rabbi, lacks the resources of the Hillel community (Hillel, n.d.). Both groups appeared to work together at times, especially during high holy days such as Passover, but are independent of one another and typically hold different activities (Hillel, n.d.).

The students of Chabad were more difficult to find time to talk with, both because of their population demographics as well as their use of space on campus. Their campus space appeared to be limited to the offices on the second floor and attendance at any Chabad sponsored events throughout the week. Students who were part of Hillel, by contrast, were accessible, as were staff. Thus identifying potential participants from Hillel for inclusion in the study was relatively easy. Due to these factors, all students in the study were members of the Hillel community, which was a limitation of the study.

Within the populations of Jewish students, several experiences are noteworthy. Anti-Semitism is of great concern among these students, and many students sense that the Jewish community is welcome inside the Pasquerilla Center but under threat nationally and even at times on campus. Additionally, Kosher options in the dining centers and within Pasquerilla have provided a sense of welcome that many Jewish students did not expect but openly welcome as part of their experience at Penn State. And finally, there is a sense of belonging within the Pasquerilla Center.

Muslim Identities on Campus

There are no official numbers to determine how many students of each religious identity attend Penn State, including the Muslim community. What is known is that the numbers of students attending weekly Jummah (Friday Prayers) has grown exponentially over the last several years. One staff remarked, “When I started working here, Jummah was in one of the pods in the worship hall. Since we’ve had to move it to Frizzell, and it seems like it grows every year” (Participant SAM). With these changes, the visibility of Muslim students, who are generally easy to notice on campus, is becoming more and more prominent. Even in central Pennsylvania, Muslim identities, much like throughout the rest of America, are increasing at rapid rates (Pew, 2014).

The Muslim community was the most visible after the Jewish community in the Pasquerilla Center during the research study. Each day, a number of Muslim students would stop by the center, making a bee-line to the prayer and ablution stations before heading out again to whatever activity they were attending on campus. This happened throughout the day, but often became more prominent during noon-time prayers and especially on Friday afternoons. “Today, I’ve observed the lobby since about 9 a.m. and the Muslim students have been coming in since about 10:15 a.m., slowly gathering for Jummah. They hang out in the Garden Room but also just in and around the lobby” (observation, April 19, 2019). Students were often also in the center studying and hanging out. One group of around a dozen came and used the Garden room almost every day for two weeks straight right before finals. This group has been here each day the last three days. They are all apparently just eating and studying together in Garden (Observation, April 24, 2019). They would come together in a cluster and others would join up.

When it came to identifying students for the study, the Muslim participants were very willing to participate. In the end, five participants, including three women and two men, were randomly chosen from a group of nearly 20 to participate in a 90-minute focus group with one of the three women randomly chosen to be a part of the individual interview. The participants were all involved in some way with the Muslim Student Association on campus, but most of their activities involved the Jummah Friday prayers. The focus group and subsequent interviews explored themes that included anti-Muslim concerns, lack of Halal food options, feelings of marginalization and misunderstanding by the campus community, specific misunderstandings of Muslim identities and the role of women in Islam, and feelings of safety and belonging within the Pasquerilla Center.

Protestant and Evangelical Students

The original intent of the study was to have Protestant Christian and Evangelical Christian students separated into two separate focus groups, but due to self-determination, all students in this participant group declared themselves as Protestants. In truth, the students all come from Protestant backgrounds; two students were from the Evangelical Lutheran Church American (ELCA), one student was from the United Church of Christ (UCC), and one student was from the United Methodist (UMC). In interviews, two of the students revealed participation in an Evangelical Christian group on campus (Campus Crusade, or CRU) and held viewpoints consistent with Evangelical Christians identities. The 90-minute focus group reviewed these deep divisions but also allowed for discussion between the individuals in ways that other focus groups had struggled to do previously.

Several significant themes emerged from this focus group, sometimes at odds with one another, including various viewpoints about how the Christian tradition is addressing the

LGBTQIA identities of individuals, the ways in which Christians are or are not welcome as a part of the Pasquerilla Center, feelings of marginalization on campus, and a common understanding of the privilege of being Christian on a campus such as Penn State. Overall, this focus group held the most divergent viewpoints, with participants divided over several of these themes, but demonstrating a sense of respect toward one another and their common bonds of Christian identity.

Student Perspectives Missing from the Study

Hinduism in America is consistently growing. It is expected that the 2020 U.S. Census will reveal a national population of over 1 million members of the Hindu population living in America. This would indicate a growth from just over 17,000 in 1974, just after the Immigration and Nationalization Act of the same year (Pew, 2017). Yet at Penn State's campus, identifying Hindu students was difficult. The Hindu Student Association met at the Pasquerilla Center only one night, on Thursdays, and did not respond to emails requesting a chance to meet with the group. Additionally, the group met on their own and did not interact with others in the Pasquerilla Center.

Additionally, finding and identifying Atheist and other non-religious students was difficult within the bounds of the Pasquerilla Center. The student group, which had an office in the center, appeared to use the space only infrequently. As one staff member stated, "We just don't hear from them much," (Participant SALLY). It is difficult to make assumptions from this. But in general, it appeared that students were not using the space nearly as much as other communities on campus. Thus it is possible the center is not as welcoming as it is for these other populations. In the case of the current study, no results can be determined.

The lack of these communities may be caused by a generalized lack of support within the center for these individuals. The CFSED's staff is not dedicated to conducting outreach to any specific communities, and throughout the study it appeared that these individuals were there to simply support, not foster and create religious communities. If Hindu, Sikh, and non-religious students are not interested in participating in the multifaith activities, then it did not appear to be the job of the CFSED to change this dynamic. Outreach on behalf of the campus administration appeared to be limited to those who had chosen to attend center events. This does not mean the center's staff is not attempting to support these identities, though it could be argued that they are attempting to support Hindu, Sikh, and non-religious identities less than they do Muslim and Jewish identities.

A Climate of Marginalization and Misunderstanding

One of the key findings among the students was a juxtaposition of how the students felt both welcomed and marginalized at Penn State. One student remarked, "The campus in general wants to provide a lot of support, but we still kind of feel like they just not fully supportive of our identities and needs" (Participant ALLISON). This was the response of one student when asked about the current feelings of welcome. The Muslim community in general sensed that the campus was full of advocates, that professors and staff, especially those in the Pasquerilla Center, were there to help. The students felt welcomed, as they said several times. But there were key indicators that their needs were not being fully met. One Muslim student noted, "We are done with finals before Ramadan starts, but next year, it'll be during finals. I don't know if the university has any thoughts about how to support us when we are fasting" (Participant SARA). In conversation, students were all noticeably unsure if the university would respond to those and other needs. This mixture of feeling supported, but still wondering just how far the university

was willing to go to support them was a dominant one among the student participants. This came out when considering dietary options and needs for Muslim and Jewish students, concerns around anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim sentiments, and among Christian students in relation to their beliefs, values, and perceptions.

Dietary Needs of Muslim and Jewish Students

Muslim participants affirmed what had been previously stated by campus staff: there are Halal options in one dining center on campus. Students felt as though the university “Should do a better job of providing for these needs” (Participant ALLISON). The students were surprised that there were not more options. One Muslim student stated, “I typically try to have salad or something if I am eating on campus, but yeah there are few options” (Participant, SARA). Of the five students in the focus group, four were international, and each expressed some level of surprise. “I just figured the campus would have more Halal options. I was really surprised that they didn’t” (Participant DAVE). When pressed, this student said that the campus never told them that there were not options.

Campus administrative staff had previously stated the lack of Halal options, but these same administrators stated that it was difficult to determine need. The Muslim students did not indicate any specific advocacy work on campus to address these concerns, noting that most students simply “figure it out” (Participant STEVE). This lack of support by the administration and the lack of student willingness to advocate may be an underlying issue behind why the university is not addressing these needs more thoroughly. The lack of Halal options on campus did appear to be of concern to students and each were hopeful that the university might respond to the needs in the coming years.

When it came to Kosher options for the Jewish community, there were b feelings of being better supported, but only marginally. “I don’t really keep Kosher so I guess it doesn’t matter to me” (Participant SARAH). This response by one of the Jewish participants highlighted an aspect of the Jewish identities on campus I had not fully expected in conversations around dining hall options. Many of the Jewish participants, possibly because of their status as reformed Jews, did not necessarily worry about keeping Kosher, and thus were relatively unaffected by having Kosher options in the dining centers. “Having Kosher in the dining center is just amazing. I love being able to find it relatively easily and also having the Kosher kitchen here at the Center to cook in” (Participant KRISTINE). But many also expressed little to no expectation that the campus would be able to provide Kosher options when they arrived.

In previous experiences and in informal conversations with the Chabad Rabbi, who again is mostly tasked with a group of Orthodox Jewish students, he indicated that Chabad had been appealing to the campus for years to have more Kosher options on campus. With the help of the CFSED Director, they were able to make inroads and accomplish some of these needs over the past few years. The Chabad Director talked about hosting people at his house off campus for certain religious holidays, including Passover, so that students might be able to follow more strict Jewish dietary laws. In conversations with CFSED, the staff indicated that efforts to provide more Kosher, and for that matter Halal, options on campus were still in process.

Jewish participants in the study appeared to feel relatively unsupported by the campus climate and its policies and practices across campus that had as of the study not yet provided much in the way of these dietary needs. It did appear, as previously discussed, that the Hillel community appealed during the design and build phase of the Pasquerilla Center for a fully Kosher-friendly kitchen for themselves. This was something that appeared to have been a

significant requirement of the sizable gift that Hillel made to the building fund back in the late 1990s (reviewed documents). But if Jewish students are not in need, or do not speak up about these needs on campus, then the campus climate appeared to be generally acceptable to students. Yet, the institution is still lacking Kosher options that uphold strict Orthodox requirements in dining centers across campus.

Anti-Muslim Campus Climate Concerns

As is so prominent on campuses today (Jacobsen & Jacobson, 2008, Thrush & Haberman, 2018) the Muslim community at Penn State appeared to be dealing with a string of anti-Muslim, or what is better known as Islamophobic, issues on campus. “We have had a lot of threats. There have been flyers, speakers, and some incidents that just take place as a part of the political climate” (Participant LESLIE). Students discussed an incident from 2016 in which a Muslim woman had her hijab pulled off while walking on campus. Student responses indicated that the tension on campus “comes and goes” but happens far too often on campus (Participants LESLIE, STEVE).

The students, though, were also quick to point out that they do feel as though the campus is working to support them. “It feels like everyone is trying to be supportive. We have a lot of administrators and professors that ask how we are doing” (Participant SARA). When pressed, students could not point to any specific activities that had occurred but had a general sentiment that the campus cared. They did pinpoint the CFSED staff as being supportive and providing responses to the terrorist attacks of Christchurch in New Zealand as well as a response to the Trump Administration’s ban on visitors from seven countries with high populations of Muslims.

These events resonated with all students as ways in which they felt supported and welcomed on campus. They said that despite the many incidents on campus, “the staff are really trying to help” in getting the campus to add more Halal options within the dining centers (Participant ALLISON).

Anti-Semitic Campus Climate Concerns

Anti-Semitic speech on campus is on the rise (Pew, 2019). At Penn State, this appears to be no different. Jewish students spoke openly about incidents on campus that felt to them like anti-Semitism. “The campus has incidents all the time. This is what happens when Trump is president” (Participant JESSE). The current political climate certainly appeared to be a dominant aspect of student’s experience of anti-Semitism on campus. “It just feels like people feel empowered to hate on others, including us, because of what is happening in the country” (Participant KRISTINE). These sentiments were all in response to feelings as though the Jewish community on campus was being targeted. Students responded that they were not at all surprised about this though and had somewhat expected this on campus.

Jewish students spoke to concerns related to the Boycott, Divest, and Sanction, better known as “BDS” movements on campus. “The campus has this bent against Israel and the stance Hillel has. And yes, there is work to be done, but one person’s beliefs can often be a sign of anti-Jewish sentiments” (Participant KRISTINE). This feeling was universally affirmed by all Jewish participants, as the campus climate appears to be weighted toward the support of a pro-Palestinian viewpoint while Jewish students felt that Israel was viewed poorly. “We understand there are challenges, but history matters. Israel is our home” (Participant KENNETH). Several of the students had attended birthright trips, a coming of age opportunity for all Jewish students

under the age of 35, to go on a free trip to Israel. Students expressed these attacks on Israel as being among the many anti-Semitic actions of a campus targeting Jewish identity.

Jewish students pointed to incidents of flyering on campus that included anti-Semitic speech and incidents in the classroom where faculty were “hostile” toward religious beliefs, to incidents of anti-Semitic microaggressions amongst peer groups. “The campus may look like it’s perfectly welcome, and we feel welcome here at the Pasquerilla Center, but not everywhere on campus” (Participant JESSE). Penn State’s Pasquerilla Center did appear to be a safe space for students on campus, even with the tension that existed around BDS, partially because it is caused by interfaith tensions between the Muslim and the Jewish community. The campus in general remained a place of hostility in the eyes of the students, with nearly universal agreement that the campus was not in favor of the stances of Hillel on the Israeli conflict.

Tensions of Values and Perceptions

Muslim gender norms

As previously stated, Muslim participants who identified as women were selected for the focus groups. When they came to the focus group, one of the three women, an American, came without a headscarf, one of the traditional signs of Muslim identity. When asked about it, the Muslim student participant explored that she had made the choice not to wear the headscarf when she entered college, and that it had “been a challenging conversation with her parents” (Participant LESLIE). The other two Muslim women wore headscarves. When asked about her headscarf, one student explained “There are a lot of people on campus who don’t understand it. They believe that we are viewed as lower in status to the men” (Participant SARA). To provide a space for the women to discuss further, I asked the men to refrain from responding during this part of the discussion. I asked the Muslim women to explain their feelings of marginalization or

welcoming. One mentioned that it would “be better if we didn’t have to sit in the back during Friday prayers” (Participant LESLIE). But the other two women said that “this is the way we do it” (Participants SARA, DAVE). There was tension between thoughts regarding this theme, as the woman without a headscarf expressed her feelings that she “didn’t want others making decisions on how she practiced her faith and would like to make a choice where she sits for prayers instead of being told where to sit” (Participant LESLIE). When asked, the Muslim women participants were mixed in their response to how they felt about the campus at large holding gender stereotypes regarding Muslim women (as Muslim identities are often seen with women in a lesser role than men) and whether it mattered.

Catholic Students and Sexuality

Not every Catholic student felt the same way, but in general, Catholic identifying students overall thought their values were more conservative than others on campus. Participants highlighted their feelings about their Catholic identity, their beliefs on the role of men and women in marriage, political viewpoints, and especially their stance on abortion as values that were different and at times at odds with their peers (Participant JOHN). These themes brought to light larger questions about how the campus climate supported or did not support their religious identities on campus.

Specifically, the conversation on abortion was highlighted as a division between Catholic students and others on campus. “I don’t believe in abortion. I think it’s a sin. And it just seems like everyone else on campus thinks I’m wrong” (Participant MAXINE). Three students pinpointed that there were offices on campus for women’s health services and that they had seen flyers and pamphlets for off-campus women’s services related to abortion. One student talked about her experience of participating in the campus pro-life group. “Being pro-life is hard on

campus. There are a lot of stigmas. It seems like if I'm pro-life, I am not seen as a feminist. But I believe women should have control over their own bodies. I just believe that you shouldn't be having sex if you aren't ready to get pregnant" (Participant, RAY). Students' beliefs varied about whether abortion was ever ok but in general felt as though the campus climate was at odds in general with their beliefs. They did not always feel comfortable in sharing their thoughts on the subject.

Similarly, Catholic students talked about abstinence from sex. "A lot of my friends who are not Catholic have had or are having sex. It seems like they are ok with my choices, but I just think that the campus is very different about this than I believe" (Participant MAXINE). Most Catholic participants, four out of five, agreed that sex is reserved for marriage and that they were planning to wait. In the individual follow-up interview, the participant asked to have her answers protected regarding this topic and it is thus not included in the study. The campus climate did not seem to be as welcoming of their beliefs and practices regarding their sexuality as the students might have sought.

The students discussed that the Catholic community had divisions regarding this issue, and two members of the community were more liberal in their views related to sexuality, women's contraception, and abortion. The Catholic priests and the staff of the Newman Center were noted as "not good places to go to find support on this subject" (Participant JENNIFER). It appeared then that this was a point of tension within the Catholic community, one which is built upon a culture of more liberal values that is clearly not unique to Penn State. The students felt that little could be done to change this tension in an environment such as a 21st century publicly university campus.

Protestant Students and Perceptions of Beliefs Related to the LGBTQIA Community

Protestant churches tend to have mixed theologies about the queer community that exists in the United States. Several denominations, including the ELCA (Lutherans), UCC, Episcopal Church U.S.A., Presbyterian Church U.S.A. and the Disciples of Christ, have all passed resolutions in recent years regarding a stance toward inclusion of queer identifying individuals as a part of their leadership. They have made it permissible to be married by a leader in the denomination, for example (Religion News Service, n.d.). The United Methodist Church, the largest mainline denomination in the United States, has continued to struggle over this issue. In February 2019, it affirmed the Church's stance against any form of homosexuality as a part of either leadership or marriage practices (UMCommunications, May 1, 2019).

In interviews, student participants were mixed on how they felt regarding this topic on campus. Two students, who both participated in Evangelical Christian groups on campus, felt as though the campus climate, which is highly welcoming of LGBTQIA identities as identified by students, is counter to their faith practices. "I struggle with where to stand on this. I've read the Bible and it seems pretty clear that homosexuality is a sin" (Participant ROSE). Other students, countering this, stated that the Bible "has been misinterpreted" (Participant ELIZABETH). In discussion, the student participants were able to understand each other's viewpoints, but remained divided overall. One particular student expressed that "the campus is more conservative than I might have expected, but still aligns with my values" (Participant MEGAN). This student in particular was not sure exactly where she stood in her beliefs around the LGBTQIA community.

When asked to discuss how they might feel about telling a peer about their beliefs regarding the LGBTQIA community, the answers were mixed. "I might tell a trusted friend if

someone asks, but I just don't think it's something I bring up. Even though I'm clear that I believe being gay to be a sin" (Participant ROSE). Students also expressed the difficulty in sharing beliefs around a love the sinner but hate the sin mentality that is an oft-used phrase by more conservative Christians (Participant JONAH). Other participants, who identified as welcoming and inclusive in their beliefs around LGBTQIA identities, felt that Christianity has a bad rap on campus (Participant ELIZABETH).

Christian students who were interviewed for the study were unanimous in their feelings that being Christian was a challenge on campus. Some students attested that this had to do with the previously discussed beliefs and practices including their stances on the LGBTQIA community. Others stated that it is hard to be a Christian because "if I tell anyone, they automatically think I'm homophobic" (Participant ROSE). Additionally, one student affirmed "to be Christian is to be seen as conservative, sometimes as a Trump supporter, and definitely against some of the progressive views a lot of people have" (Participant ELIZABETH). Additionally, three of the students affirmed a statement by one participant (MEGAN) that "most of the campus is atheist, or at least not interested in religion, so they think we are weird." These beliefs that students held were consistent with other research that exists acknowledging that while in the majority, many Protestant students feel marginalized on campus. The viewpoints are complex and stem from campuses that tend to avoid the topic of religion so deeply that to be religious is believed to be counter to the campus climate.

Placed in context, throughout the study, it appeared that each community interviewed had different challenges in finding a place of welcome on campus. Whether it was through the real threat of anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic biases on campus or the perceptions that existed because

of values and stereotypes, no group could pinpoint that they felt overwhelmingly welcome on campus at large.

Thus, the experience of the campus climate which seeks to be inclusive of religious, secular, and spiritual identities is significantly mixed, with some efforts being made, yet persistent feelings of marginalization taking place.

It is interesting to note how many of these issues that were discussed by the students were not at all discussed by the staff of the CFSED. This leads to a question of disconnect between the staff of the Center and the students themselves. If the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish students who were part of the study expressed concerns about their campus experience that the staff either neglected to discuss or simply did not recognize, then there may also be concerns among the Hindu, Sikh, and Atheist communities about which the staff are unaware. This may be preventing those students from finding a home in the CFSED due to lack of sensitivity. This could be said to be somewhat reinforced when the discussion shifted to whether the Pasquerilla Center itself was a space where students felt welcomed. Their comments changed, with students sensing the center as a place to call home while at Penn State. Yet the only responses that were able to be gathered were from Jewish, Christian, and Muslim students. It is to these responses that the study now turns.

Pasquerilla Center as a Place to Belong

Jewish students

All Jewish focus group participants sensed that the Pasquerilla Center was their home on campus. Students discussed during the interview and the focus groups that most Jewish students they knew would come by the center for either food or to hang out together. Additionally, with

Shabbat services being held at the Pasquerilla Center, it was easy to get to know the Jewish community simply by coming by on a Friday night.

Students in general felt safe to attend these services and attendance helped to create a sense of belonging within the Jewish community and the larger Pasquerilla community.

Within the center, there were no obvious tensions between Jewish students and the faith communities, minus the challenge of the above-mentioned BDS. Jewish students mentioned that there were different practices between Hillel and Chabad, but overall, students sensed that they were just as much a part of the Pasquerilla community as anyone else, with no hesitation to visit the center on a regular basis. This sense was upheld in observation. The community of students most likely to be visible on a daily basis around the Pasquerilla Center was Hillel, both from a staffing and student perspective. The sentiments of the Jewish community at Pasquerilla was closely matched with that of the Muslim community.

Muslim students

When asked about places they go on campus, Muslim students had several responses. Participant Allison stated, “This [Pasquerilla] is where I come late night to study or to hang out with friends when I’m on campus. It feels like a safe place to be for me” (Participant ALLISON). In the focus group, three students expressed that the Pasquerilla Center might be the safest place on campus for them. During interviews, staff from the CFSED remarked that “Students have said it’s the only place they feel safe” (Participant DAN). This highlighted the most important aspect of the question of campus climate among the Muslim students: the campus was perceived as unsafe while the Pasquerilla Center was seen as safe. To explore this, I asked students where they would go if the Pasquerilla Center were not there. The question took the focus group

participants by surprise, with a mixture of uncertainty and even apparent sadness at the thought of the center not existing on campus.

Muslim identities are certainly being supported and uplifted through the presence of the Pasquerilla Center and through the CFSED. The campus climate is a mixture of support and marginalization. The sense of safety the Muslim participants discussed is a key indicator that the Pasquerilla Center is a key place and space for the students on campus to gather. The expectations of the students that there be more to support their identities on campus than was present may be indicative of further concerns about the campus administrative views of the Pasquerilla Center and CFSED as the entity responsible for support for these students. It is clear that without the Pasquerilla Center, the campus would need to respond in additional ways or risk the Muslim students feeling marginalized. Feelings of marginalization, even with the Center, appeared to exist. This appeared to be the same amongst Christian students.

Christian Students

The Pasquerilla Center, students agreed, is the place where religious life seems to exist on campus. All of the student participants discussed coming to the center frequently. All felt as though they were directed to the center for religious practices and beliefs. But inside the center, there were questions as to how welcome certain participants felt. “I don’t always know what to say to others about my participation in [campus religious organization]. I kind of feel judged if I share” (Participant JONAH). Other Protestant students felt that the religious life center, as much as it was for them, was mainly for “the Jewish and Muslim students” (Participant MEGAN). This highlighted a tension present within the traditionally marginalized versus Christian identifying students: for whom does the Pasquerilla Center exist. In interviews with staff, this discussion was noted as “challenging because it highlights how we are seeking to support everyone, but

sometimes run into divisions based on belief and practice” (Participant SAM). One campus ministry professional noted that “most of my students don’t spend a lot of time here” (Participant KATHERINE). This could be in part to Christian privilege and those students having many places across campus to which they can go and have a sense of belonging. This statement was affirmed by two of the student participants during the focus group.

The Catholic students who participated in the study answered that Mass was the activity most likely to bring them into the Pasquerilla Center. In the focus group, the five student participants stated varying degrees of agreement with this general sentiment. All but one Catholic students did attest that Mass was an important aspect of their Catholic identity, and that weekly Mass was one of the most prioritized weekly activities they participated in beyond school and work. Students agreed that during the most stressful periods of the semester, such as during finals, midterms, and weeks with lots of papers, Mass would be the one activity all of them tried to keep going to. “If I get really busy, I try to at least stop working on my classwork and come to Church. It helps me refocus and remember to think about God” (Participant JOHN). Students discussed that Catholic students know that the Pasquerilla Center is where Mass is held, and most students come to the center at least once a week.

When asked in the focus group about whether going to Mass was a practice on campus they felt safe telling others about, Catholic students largely felt that it came with some judgement, but that they were safe. “I don’t tell everyone I’m Catholic, because they have stigmas related to that, but I tell them I am going to Church and most people I know think that’s cool. Sometimes they come with me if I ask” (Participant RAY). Students in general did not show concern in attending religious activities on campus.

Students felt positively regarding the physical spaces of the Pasquerilla Center in promoting their practice of Mass, “The Pasquerilla Center is beautiful. It reminds me of my home Church” (Participant JOHN). Students really enjoyed the worship hall as the place where they worship. “I feel at home. The chapel is more traditional, but the worship hall is great for weekly worship” (Participant MAXINE). The worship hall, with its unique design and influence from Christian and Jewish traditions, felt like a place of welcome for these Catholic students.

Catholic students also highlighted other spaces in the building that they used on a normal basis. The Eisenhower Chapel was a place student used for prayer and reflection. Additionally, all student participants discussed visiting the small chapel, sometimes meeting with the priest for confession or for private one-on-one meetings. Use of these spaces was by Catholic identifying individuals only; other students rarely mentioned their existence in interviews.

Bringing It All Together

Students discussed that in general, they felt good about their decision to attend Penn State in relationship to their faith practice. No student expressed a wish to have chosen to a different school or to transfer at this point in their academic journey. Finally, the students agreed that the work the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development had and was expected to continue having, impacted their experience at Penn State.

The campus climate at Penn State remained mixed, almost two decades after the opening of the Pasquerilla Center. The students’ experiences of campus illuminate that the campus climate of Penn State is moving toward more and more support with the help of the CFSED and the policies and practices of the institution. But the Pasquerilla Center is certainly the one space on campus where most students felt as though they were welcomed and had a sense of belonging as it related to the campus climate vis-à-vis religious, secular, and spiritual aspects of identity. As

will be discussed in the following chapters, these findings offer insight into both how the campus is promoting a campus climate and also has further to go in order for Penn State to be a fully welcoming place for religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

I am deeply grateful to the 18 students who agreed to participate in this study and their stories and experiences. They have added to the wealth of this study and were of deep support to me. Each student offered his or her perspective honestly and openly, even if other members of the focus group disagreed or at minimum wished to offer a different experience of the campus climate. The overall student experience at Penn State is somewhat mixed, with each of the 18 different perspectives adding layers to what is a complex campus climate. In the end, Penn State, even with its sizable multifaith center and its OFSED has, as of yet, not manifested a campus climate that can be said to be fully inclusive. Where Penn State stands in comparison to other institutions is yet to be determined and is a limitation of the study that could be explored in future research. It is clear that the student participants in the study have been impacted by the campus climate of Penn State vis-à-vis religious, secular, and spiritual aspects of identity.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION

The principal questions in this study sought to answer fundamental questions about the campus climate at Penn State University for religious, secular, and spiritual identities through the use of three specific questions:

- a) How does a physical environment such as a multifaith center support the religious, secular, and spiritual diversity of the campus environment?
- b) What role does a multifaith office and center play in the campus climate of the institution?
- c) What are the experiences of religiously affiliated students at an institution which has created a center and a physical environment for religious, secular, and spiritual identity?

The study revealed information regarding the current status of the physical environments, the institutional policies and practices, and the overall student experience of those who identify as religious, secular, and spiritual on campus. Building a common understanding of the campus climate required consideration of how all these areas interact to define the current situation.

In Strange and Banning's (2001) *Educating by Design*, the description of physical environments, aggregate environments, organizational environments, and constructed environments provide a comprehensive campus climate assessment framework. This study sought to utilize this theoretical framework. As the study progressed, use of the framework became somewhat challenging, though effective for the single-site case study approach. As a result, it felt increasingly clear that the emerging importance of the study needed a potential adaption of the theoretical framework from which it originally emerged. This tension, which will be discussed further in the implications chapter, offered a considerable challenge in how to understand a campus climate that specifically considers religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion.

While there were challenges in using the selected theoretical framework, which was designed mostly to understand campus educational design structures (Strange & Banning, 2001), several important findings are worth noting. In evaluating the campus, there were several areas of unfulfilled expectations involving either the physical environments or the policies and practices of the Pasquerilla Center and the corresponding Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development. The goals originally framed within the guiding documents of the Pasquerilla Center, both historically and presently, did not always align with the current experiences of students and the larger campus. Additionally, expected outcomes of programming hosted by the Office for Spiritual and Ethical Development (OFSED) did not always align the realities found within the study. Oftentimes administrators and staff who are responsible for the spaces and the programming had intentions for said spaces and events which did not align with the perceptions of students. This chapter begins first by understanding how the center did and did not foster a pluralistic environment and continues with a larger understanding of the campus climate. Figure 20 describes the outcomes explored throughout the rest of the discussion and into the study's further considerations.

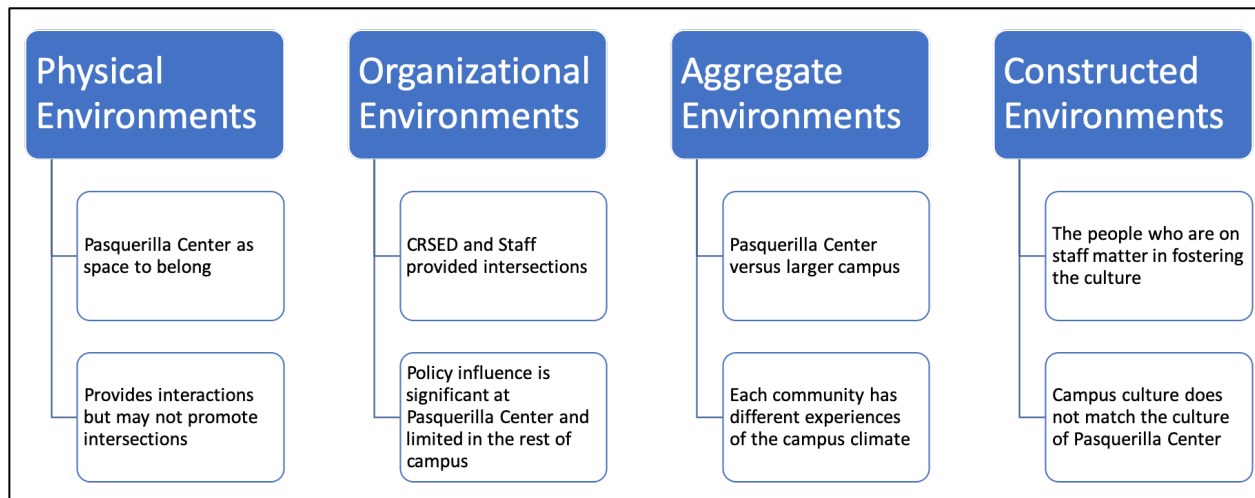


Figure 20. Outcomes of study using *Educating by Design* theoretical framework.

Physical Environments

This study sought to consider the Pasquerilla Center as a vital physical environment potentially capable of providing the necessary components to promote an inclusive campus experience for religious, secular, and spiritual identities. The study utilized Strange and Banning's model in order to understand how the center contributed to this environment. Creation of physical environments tend to focus on the ways in which universities seek to achieve accommodation for what are typically Muslim students on campus (Nielsen & Small, 2019). But in using Strange and Banning's framework, serious questions emerged as to whether physical environments, and specifically the Pasquerilla Center, were capable of supporting the diversity of identities.

Muslim, Jewish, and Christian Students Are Welcome, But Not Others

The intent of Penn State University in its support of the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development and its maintaining of the Pasquerilla Center can be gleaned from its website, which appeared to be the only location within the Penn State website where it is stated. The

center “offers a welcoming, safe, inclusive environment for the Penn State community to explore a multitude of faith traditions in a compassionate, open-minded setting” (Penn State, n.d.). This statement helps to frame that Penn State intentionally hopes to be a place of safety and belonging on campus for all religious, secular, and spiritual identities. Inclusivity was shown to be a part of the experience of students within the center, but there was a clear indication that the Pasquerilla Center was an outlier on campus where certain students, especially Muslim students, felt safe gathering compared to elsewhere on campus.

The greater threat though can be found in the words “multitude of faith traditions.” It is true that the Pasquerilla Center is home to a number of traditions, including Atheist, Hindu, Buddhist, and other groups on campus, at least in that each of the groups have an office space for their club within the center. Yet, difficulty in locating these groups, identifying participants for the study, and lack of visibility of these individuals within the day to day activities of the center begs the question whether or not these groups are truly a part of the multitudes to be welcomed.

The physical environments of the Pasquerilla Center are specifically designed and maintained to support Christian, Muslim, and Jewish students. The Kosher kitchen, Muslim prayer room, and the worship hall, as well as the original Eisenhower Chapel, hold reverence toward the Abrahamic traditions, which today still represent the largest populations of religious life on college campuses (PRC, 2014). Hindu and Buddhist traditions are known for their vibrant prayer life as well (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2008). And yet, there are few, if any, signs of their identities within the center. It was noted by staff that there were efforts to bring in a group of Buddhist monks by the CFSED early in the spring, prior to my visit. I was shown the mandala which they created for placement in the Pasquerilla Center (interviews with participant SAM).

Yet, little physical environmental aspects of the Pasquerilla Center demonstrated any support for these populations nor Sikh, Jain, or Daoist identities.

This absence was particularly present when considering atheist, humanist, agnostic, and other worldviews which are non-religious. Many of the rooms analyzed were neutral in orientation, including the pods, the Garden Room, Frizzell, the Memorial Lounge, and the Harshbarger Room. Yet physical environmental behavioral markers which directly promoted non-religious conversations and events were difficult to find. This included no promotional materials in the main atrium of the Pasquerilla Center. It should be noted that the observation period of the study was near the end of the school year, and thus a lack of events and programming can be attributed to the timeframe in which the study was completed.

Overall, the physical environments of the Pasquerilla Center attempt to provide a space of welcome to Christian, Jewish, and Muslim students and likely are doing so in ways which far out-pace many other spaces around Penn State's campus at large. This lack of comprehensive inclusion, though, can threaten to undercut the larger aims and goals of the center. There are greater questions that emerged within the study related to the physical environment of the Pasquerilla Center. These namely involved whether a multifaith center could actually provide a pluralistic environment that promoted intersections of religious identities.

Interactions but Not Intersections

Observations were conducted of the spaces in the Pasquerilla Center over several weeks, and the interactions of students and student groups within it. These observations revealed that while there are many religious communities that use the center's spaces, there were few shared experiences through programming or activities, or what I describe as intersections, between groups. The communities were interacting because of their relative proximity to one another,

thus the Jewish community and the Muslim community might come across one another but rarely actively engaged with one another. The Jewish community often divided itself between the Hillel and Chabad communities, and this segmentation was animated by the two groups occupying entirely different areas of the building. Catholic students often would spend most of their time in the Newman Center's offices on the second floor of the building or participating in Mass in the worship hall. The Muslim students, while frequently in the building, often kept to their own tribes in almost all interactions. Mixing of religious traditions rarely occurred among students and even religious life staff only interacted minimally.

Student group offices are located primarily on the second floor of the Center. Here, one wing was mostly a grouping of evangelical Christian groups on campus, while the other wing, divided by a physical barrier of a set of doors, is where the more progressive Protestant Christian campus ministries were located. The interactions between these two sets of groups were minimal at best, with cordial conversations taking place among staff, but almost no interactions taking place among students (observation April 18, 2019). This again appears to be somewhat expected based on the ways in which the building was designed to create the segmentation of the communities into specific spaces for their religious practice. And while the study revealed no verbalized frustrations or hostility from students toward others, this lack of engagement potentially reveals that there may be more occurring that is not being openly discussed and discovered as part of this study.

Programming by religious communities highlighted this lack of interaction as well. The religious communities holding programming rarely if ever crossed religious community or especially religious tradition lines (observations April 18 & April 20, 2019). Instead, almost all programming was focused inwardly, its audiences intended only for the communities who were

holding the events (interviews with participants GREG, SAM, ALAN). This may have been a natural result of campus ministries feeling responsible first and foremost to their intended missions, as one such staff member remarked during interviews (Participant DAN).

Lack of interaction was also observed in the Pasquerilla Center lobby space, in which communities of students took over the couches in the center of the lobby in affinity groups. One group would take over the set of couches and chairs, would depart, and another would arrive. “Today, I’ve watched three separate changeovers of groups. I think I saw this yesterday. The Muslim students were first, then a group of Catholic students, now the Jewish students. But they never really hang out together” (observation April 14, 2019). Rarely, if ever, did groups truly interact with one another. This leads to the conclusion that the Pasquerilla Center may be a vessel for inclusion to the extent that religious groups are welcome, but that the physical environment of the Pasquerilla Center does not promote a deeper pluralistic and intersectional experience, at least on its own. This creation of a physical environment has become little more than a location in which all religious communities on campus were brought together, but not to be together.

In using Strange and Banning’s (2001) framework in an effort to understand and assess the intersections between groups, the physical environmental structure of the Pasquerilla Center helped to understand the ways in which students are meant to act and operate within the space. Because there were spaces within the building designed for specific communities, such as the Kosher kitchen, worship hall, Muslim prayer space, etc., groups naturally segmented themselves into specific areas of the building. But they did so through Strange and Banning’s understanding of aggregate environments as well (2001). Certain groups appeared to be more comfortable in the Pasquerilla Center, especially the Jewish and Muslim communities, while other groups like

Hindus and Sikhs might have not felt as welcome. The reasons for this might include the ways Hindu and Sikh identifying students may or may not need to use space in the same way as Jewish and Muslim identifying students may. Additionally, over time, there have been natural increases in populations of Muslim and Jewish groups in the Center. Thus, the homogeneous environmental conditions, a key marker for Strange and Banning (2001) are indicative of Jewish and Muslim identity sense of belonging. It is worth considering how the lack of Atheist, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, and other groups are preventing the goals of diversity and inclusion that were intended in the design of the Pasquerilla Center. The lack of these populations may present long term challenges at the Pasquerilla Center as the aggregate remains heavily weighted toward Jewish and Muslim identities.

Little encouragement by individual religious communities and their leadership existed that encouraged participation in intersectional experiences. One student remarked, “We’re just busy. I try to hang out with my friends at (the other religious communities), but I just don’t think about it. I think I just don’t have a lot of time” (Participant KRISTINE). Additionally, while never confirmed in interviews, there appeared to be a culture among the Evangelical Christian community of disengagement in interfaith activities (observation April 19, 2019). If this is true among all students, there is a chance that the lack of intersection is an effect of both timing and culture. Yet, a stark reality may also be present: students just do not know how to have these interactions.

What may also be possible but cannot fully be determined from the current research is that the students just do not care about those interactions. Because the students interviewed generally felt welcome, at least at the Pasquerilla Center, the lack of intersections I observed appeared to have little influence upon students. Yet, there may be effects upon the campus

climate that are preventing other members of the campus community from understanding these different religious communities and their needs. This leads to a questionable outcome for the Pasquerilla Center and the use of physical environments as a means to foster an inclusive campus. Physical spaces within the Pasquerilla Center alone were not capable of producing a fully pluralistic experience at Penn State. The physical environment's promotion of segmented community based on behavioral markers of which types of activities take place in each physical environment may be the root cause of this. Further perpetuating this problem are the religious communities and their missions and goals. Pasquerilla itself appears to heavily favor Christian, Muslim, and Jewish students. But the environmental conditions also tended not to promote intersectional experiences.

Promoting a safe and welcoming environment at Penn State required a more engaged approach than what the mere presence of a physical environment might offer. To reach intersectionality, the university staff needed to be engaged. This is where understanding the larger interconnections between the Pasquerilla Center itself and the impact of the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development became prominent within the study. The CFSED's efforts, under the tenet of organizational environments, to which we now turn, presented a method through which the physical spaces of Pasquerilla might ultimately be able to build the intersections that are necessary for a campus climate of inclusion.

Organizational Environments

The CRSED Fosters Intersections

Strange and Banning (2001) argued that the physical environment of a campus demonstrates the values an institution wishes to convey to its intended constituency. As they discussed, there is no greater determinant in students choosing to enroll in a university than the

way in which the campus looks and feels when they visit (Strange & Banning, 2001). Few campuses across the country have yet to create physical environments that reflect the complex needs of religious, secular, and spiritual identities on campus (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2008). Penn State's significant investment would for Strange and Banning (2001) appear to be enough to demonstrate a campus climate that was inclusive of these identities and would put to rest a student's concern about their religious, secular, and spiritual safety and sense of belonging on campus. But the physical environment alone was not able to foster such a climate. Instead, the climate required effective organizational environments in the form of the CFSED as well as oversight by a staff that were well attuned to the needs of the campus.

Staff across the institution were responsible in fostering a campus climate. This study included faculty (NANCY) as well as staff of the CFSED (SAM, SALLY, KEITH, DAN) and other members of the campus administration. Each brought their own perspectives and experiences to the campus. For a faculty member such as Nancy, her role was defined by fostering a learning environment that simply responded to historical accuracy. For CFSED staff, its role was more defined by the Center's mission of fostering inclusive and welcoming environments, but without being engaged in religious activities. Instead, the students presented their needs and the CFSED staff responded. Finally, campus administration, further removed from the experiences of the religious, secular, and spiritual identifying students, balanced a number of institutional needs with the needs of these students outlined in this study. No staff participant was singularly tasked with fostering new student engagement with religious life, thus a potential lack of Hindu, Sikh, and other religious identities was simply left unaddressed by any of these staff.

Student participants frequently discussed the important role of the CFSED in fostering a sense of welcome on campus. “(Staff of the CFSED) are involved so much in the programming. I’ve been able to come to a lot of events that my community doesn’t normally do” (Participant JOHN). Additionally, students discussed that there were many opportunities to come to new events held between groups, sponsored by the CFSED (Participant MEGAN, ALLISON, KENNETH). The staff were often supportive in a variety of ways, from mentoring students in program development and providing advocacy across campus (observation April 17, 2019), but there appeared to be no more influential aspect of their work than in the bringing together of diverse groups of individuals to find commonalities.

Staff of the CRSED, such as Sam and Dan, as well as faculty, such as Nancy, would remark that their work was often interfaith in nature (Participants SAM, DAN, NANCY). These efforts were often aimed at helping students to notice each other, including helping them to be “better together” as Eboo Patel (2007) often attests in his work with the Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC, n.d.). One student remarked, “The programming offered at Pasquerilla always helps me meet new people. I became friends with some of the people from MSA (the Muslim Student Association) through an event at Pasquerilla.” (Participant JONAH).

These interactions were important to the study because of their relation to the second question of the study: what is the impact upon the campus climate of a multifaith center? Only through university sponsored programming sponsored by CFSED were there any more than minimal interactions between religious, secular, and spiritual identity groups within the Pasquerilla Center and throughout the campus. When students got involved in specific religious communities, it was likely for the purposes of their religious practice. For example, to be involved in the Catholic community was likely for the purposes of attending Mass, Catholic

religious practice, and deepening of their personal faith. Thus, the primary community with which a student affiliates that likely draws a student to the center itself does not encourage interactions with other groups in the center. University sponsored programming from the CFSED appeared to be responsible for most of the interactions between groups. Grounded in its mission and vision, the CFSED and its staff were crucial in providing a campus climate in which intersections between religious, secular, and spiritual identities took place. It appeared that without the center and staff who are engaged in innovative initiatives, no intersection would even take place.

Intersection took place in an environment with engaged members of the campus community who were willing to provide opportunities to help students become more curious and critically engaged with religious diversity. The religious life groups on campus, with their missions and visions to spread the word about their groups, were less able to make this possible. In interviews, the religious life staff, such as campus ministers, often discussed the tension of upholding their responsibilities to their synods, conferences, bishops, and congregations while also attempting to provide meaningful experiences across communities (interviews with participants KATHERINE, NANCY). This often was a secondary or a tertiary activity for these groups, but not for the center's staff, who had no allegiance to a religious community and no mandate to help students to be more religiously engaged with a particular tradition (Participant DAN).

Penn State's commitment to providing staff to support religious, secular, and spiritual identities appeared to be the potential key to the campus climate. It can be hypothesized from the study that without these staff efforts, the campus is likely to have little to no interactions among students from different religious, secular, and spiritual identities. Being without such a staff

would not only be a detriment to campus but would be a threat to the campus climate for the marginalized religious communities that are prominent in the Pasquerilla Center and throughout this study. Thus, the CFSED may be holding together an entire campus climate. But this does not come without a consequence.

As previously discussed, the study may have revealed support for Christian, Muslim, and Jewish students, but a lack of support, potentially, for other traditions. Observation of all staff within the CFSED revealed all members of the office to be white and mostly Christian-identified. There were several instances of staff actually using very Christian-oriented conversations with students as they stopped by in the atrium to talk with the CFSED. “It’s very interesting to notice that over the last hour, staff has talked with four separate students about their faith and religious practices and they all come out of their own personal tradition” (observation April 18, 2019). Additionally, interviews with the staff revealed that all identified as either Christian in some form or agnostic (Participants SAM, DAN, GREG).

The CFSED holds influences the campus climate, and especially the Pasquerilla Center, in building intersections and providing a climate of inclusion. The fact that it does so in an environment in which there were traditions that were not specifically welcomed is alarming and worth noting. Potentially, this could result in the need to hire more diverse staff who hold greater sensitivity toward the needs of South Asian traditions like Sikhism and Hinduism. This would align with the earlier statement that who you hire is important, (Participant SAM) as one staff member attested.

The conclusion that can be surmised is that the most impactful factor of the physical spaces of the Pasquerilla Center and the organizational environment of the CFSED is the organizational environment itself. If true, universities may be putting resources into the wrong

area when they simply build a prayer or reflection space on campus and do little else to provide staffing to support the students using the space. If isolated, there is an argument that the physical environment alone might not even be able to draw students to multifaith centers such as the Pasquerilla Center. Studies of multifaith spaces at other campuses revealed oftentimes empty chapels and unknown prayer and reflection spaces that are never utilized due to lack of dedicated staff (Nielsen & Small, 2019). Yet, even these two dimensions do not tell the complete picture of what is occurring at Penn State in terms of a climate for religious, secular, and spiritual identities. To do this, the study must still consider two other important factors beginning with the culture of campus and Pasquerilla, better known by Strange and Banning (2001) as constructed environments.

Constructed Environments

To gain an even wider view of campus, I considered how Strange and Banning's (2001) constructed environments tenet could help provide a perspective of campus. Essentially as the culture that embodies the university itself, the constructed environment is the general sense of welcoming and inclusion that individual students feel about the campus at large. The results are mixed, with many staff having an expectation that the campus is welcoming which far exceeds the experiences of the students interviewed, though the results differ based to which faith community a student belongs.

The general perspectives of the campus administrators interviewed across campus were that the campus provides a positive and supportive climate toward religious, secular, and spiritual identities on campus (Participants GREG, ALEX, ALAN). Yet, a lack of engagement and support from the campus at large was noted by several students (Participants JOHN, JESSE, LESLIE, STEVE). Most persons interviewed were somewhat connected with the Pasquerilla

Center, so there is a potential for the data to be skewed toward a perception that the campus is a welcoming environment. Yet, the students felt as though outside the Pasquerilla Center, support was somewhat limited. In discussions with the center staff, as well as students, it became apparent that the general campus is not as nearly as accepting of religious, secular, and spiritual identities as was the Center. The efforts are on-going, and as one staff member noted, “more efforts have been made recently, but some apathy regarding religious, secular, and spiritual identities still exists here (Penn State)” (Participant SAM).

In an interview with a faculty member who has done work with the Pasquerilla Center, this belief that the campus was not welcoming toward religious, secular, and spiritual identities was affirmed.

I have students all the time that ask why we are talking about religion. As a historian, this question is easy for me. But for our students, there tends to be some apprehension. And I’m the only one in my department even working in this area (Participant NANCY).

This was a further sign that the campus itself may not be the most welcoming of spaces.

The students’ perception that the campus might not be as welcoming as the spaces within the Pasquerilla Center is a significant question to consider in terms of campus climate. If a university builds a space on campus that is meant to support a certain type of need, how then might the rest of campus respond. If only certain areas of an institution of higher education are welcoming, this may be a condition of the aggregate environment, in which students fit in certain areas and communities. But if the larger campus is itself not a welcoming place, then the constructed environment, which is essentially the culture of the campus, should be analyzed.

At Penn State, there appeared to be growing support, and thus the presence of the Pasquerilla Center may have fostered some level of influence upon the campus climate. In interviews with staff members in the CFSED, it was noted that people are reaching out from across the campus more regularly than previously. One staff member in the CFSED stated, “We used to not get anyone to contact us, but now it feels like more people are paying attention” (Participant DAN). This led to a question about how the external units that are under the Office for Student Affairs might be connected or disconnected and thus whether the broader culture of the campus climate supports religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

Intersection with Diversity and Inclusion Units

Throughout the study, attempts were made to find intersections that existed between the Pasquerilla Center and in general religious, secular, and spiritual identities with other areas of diversity and inclusion on campus. This effort sought to understand if there was a broader culture of inclusion or exclusion. The only office which was found to have any degree of connection was that of the LGBTQIA Office at Penn State. As a result, I met with one staff member from that office. Protestant Christian students discussed being connected to this office (Participant JONAH, JONAH). Jewish students as well mentioned shared programming opportunities with the office (Participant KRISTINE)

In interviews with the staff of the GLBTQIA Office, it was noted that they had been previously connected to Pasquerilla and that, “because I know the Center well, I have tried to keep an open door to shared programming” (Participant KEITH). The participant noted that this work is important because, “many members of the GBLTQIA community identify often on campus with the harm of the religious communities on campus” (Participant KEITH). But staff across Penn State spoke of the continual efforts being made toward a coming together of these

divergent areas of diversity and inclusion and instead seeking a greater intersectionality among them (Participants SAM, DAN, GREG). Additionally, students mentioned that efforts were being made to help to transform the image of the Christian community from universally homophobic and problematic for the GBLTQIA community through dialogue and targeted programming (Participant ROSE, ALEX).

The staff of the GBLTQIA Center I interviewed noted that “We want to make the campus welcoming for all differing beliefs but my job is ultimately to work with those students who support the GBLTQIA community” (Participant KEITH). Thus, for the communities of students who might align with the GBLTQIA community, there was a natural openness that the campus climate may be more culturally welcoming for them. But for students who may come from more conservative backgrounds, the campus might not feel as welcome. And this leads toward the final area of analysis: aggregate environments.

Aggregated Environments

It has been noted several times in this study that there appeared to be challenges for certain communities in finding their place on campus. The physical environments of Pasquerilla appear to be addressing the needs of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian students but not necessarily others. The CRSED was supporting intersections of the traditions which are present, but may not be fully supporting South and East Asian religious traditions. Additionally, campus policies and practices may not always provide the necessary dietary options for Muslim and Jewish needs, to say nothing of Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and Baha’is. Finally, the larger constructed environment of campus may be one in which certain students feel more welcomed, as in the case of the GBLTQIA Center identifying or welcoming religious students. The campus is thus one of mixed results, which is unsurprising considering that needs are different based on which community an

individual is a part. The campus climate should not be stated as a uniformly welcoming or unwelcoming place for religious, secular, and spiritual identities. But the question of the aggregated environments, at least for Strange and Banning (2001), is the question of who does feel welcome. And that question is the last that was considered as a part of this study.

Differing Experiences Lead Toward Differing Experiences of the Campus Climate

As considered in the third question, there was a need in the study to understand the experiences of students from various religious, secular, and spiritual identities and their experiences with the campus climate. As a researcher I hypothesized that students might experience the campus climate in different ways, somewhat in part due to their religious identities. This led me to segment the focus groups into specified communities. In reviewing this, it is clear that this hypothesis was proven correct throughout the study. The findings resulted in an important discovery: despite extensive efforts, not every faith tradition on campus experienced the campus climate with the same level of belonging as others.

As highlighted previously, Evangelical Christian students tended to experience the campus climate overall as one in which their viewpoints were in conflict with the larger “more liberal environment” (Participant ELIZABETH). The experiences of these students can be said to be a response to the confronting of their own Christian privilege (Bloomenfeld, 2006). Christian students might have to come to accept that for the first time in their lives, they are not given a pass to ignore such privilege and instead are confronted with it and experience loss.

Other students experienced campus in different ways. Jewish identifying students from Hillel often found that their viewpoint conflicts revolved around stances on the existence of Israel as a country and their support of it (Participants KRISTINE, KENNETH).

Roman Catholic students noted their struggle over their views on the “pro-life stances that I have” (Participant JOHN).

But it was not just views over what are mostly political issues that led to the communities experiencing different feelings of tension. Although the Israeli and Palestinian issue was not nearly as much about religion as it was about land and watersheds. When asked, Christian students never seemed to worry about what they wore or even practicing their tradition, while at times Muslim students stated “we can be targeted when wearing hijab” (Participant ALLISON). Jewish students also struggled to feel as though they could speak up about their concerns, citing that they were considered too “white” (Participant SARAH) to be seen as marginalized. These concerns appeared to be focused on how they were perceived outside of the Pasquerilla Center.

Additionally, as has been mentioned several times throughout this study, the lack of Hindu, Sikh, and Atheist voices within this study, which were originally intended to be a part of the study, points to a question about whether the aggregate environment really is welcoming and accommodating for these communities. As will be discussed in the next chapter, this may have been related to the relative size of the campus population of Hindus, Sikhs, and Atheists. The CFSED has tried to provide as much sense of belonging and inclusion as possible among the students who use the center. Increased populations of these identities may naturally lead to their use of the Pasquerilla Center and thus greater visibility and advocacy for their needs. For now, the study cannot make any factual determination as to what the campus climate is for Hindus, Sikhs, and Atheists based on their personal perceptions. It can be noted, based on my observations, that the aggregate environment of the Pasquerilla Center may not be the place to gather.

All of this is unsurprising. In previous research, Small and Bowman (2015) found that well-being statuses of students from religious, secular, and spiritual identities differ based on their identity and the campus climate. While universities may be making more and more efforts to support communities like Jewish and Muslim students, they are still struggling with supporting Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, and Atheist communities (Small & Bowman, 2015). There exist such limited resources in higher education to understand these identities and even at Penn State, this study was not able to uncover further details of that sense of wellbeing.

From the interviews with students, Strange and Banning (2001) might say that the participants felt as though that the campus at large did not have an aggregate environment which was welcome. But inside the Pasquerilla Center, this may be different. The Muslim students talked about the location as the “place to be” (Participant ALLISON). Hillel’s location with its six offices and location inside the Pasquerilla Center certainly helped to reinforce that much of the Jewish community tends to gather in Pasquerilla. And the many religious communities with offices spaces around Pasquerilla, the location of the worship hall, and the location of Friday prayers being in Frizzell all point to an aggregate environment at Pasquerilla that creates an inclusive campus climate for Muslim, Christian, and Jewish students.

Bringing it all Together

The Pasquerilla Center at Penn State is one of the multifaith centers in the United States on which many universities benchmark their efforts toward religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion. The institution has made strides toward inclusion, but it is clear there is more work to be done. It exists today as a complicated physical environment in which there exist nearly 80 religiously affiliated student groups. The campus climate of Penn State might be seen as one in which the dedication of a physical environment itself might demonstrate overt support for

religious, secular, and spiritual life. Yet, without the CRSED, the Pasquerilla Center would be little more than a vessel through which students might come and infrequently pass by one another. Instead, the complex intersections that can take place when both an organizational environment and physical environment exist have great potential.

The constructed environment of Penn State is a complexity of cultural welcome that appears to be increasing over time based on the perceptions of staff and the needs of students. Penn State is making efforts to support religious identities, and much like other universities, the work is on-going (Nielsen & Small, 2019). But inside the Pasquerilla Center, there exists an aggregated environment that at the very least appears to welcome the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish identifying students on campus.

There may be individuals who, in reflecting upon this study, might question how the Pasquerilla Center and Penn State's general support for multifaith engagement is fostering a neutral environment. As a researcher, my response to this is that ultimately, there is no neutrality that is possible at current time related to religious and non-religious inclusion. Penn State has clearly sought to provide welcome and support for religious minorities, and this has manifested largely in support of Muslims and Jewish students, with space available but perhaps not dedicated to support of other traditions. Ultimately, the ability for a university to create "neutrality" requires at first their ability to understand how Protestant and Christian influence have been at the forefront of higher education since its beginnings and how it may be overcome today (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012 Schmalzbauer, 2019)

Perhaps a final reflection that is necessary is that of the limitations of the study and the implications for what this study has revealed that other universities and institutions might consider. The work of Penn State should not go unnoticed, and it was always my intention as a

researcher to be able to highlight what was and was not occurring at an institution that has become nationally known around this area of diversity and inclusion. As such, this, alongside a potential new framework for analysis which goes beyond that of Strange and Banning's (2001) *Educating by Design* framework is where the final chapter of the study is focused.

CHAPTER 9: FURTHER IMPLICATIONS

Religious, secular, and spiritual identity efforts are perhaps the last broad stroke that exists in higher education today toward diversity and inclusion on campus. For decades, there has been an absence of discussion within educational training programs, including master's and Ph.D. programs in higher education and student affairs programs. This has allowed for administrators and other staff professionals to ignore and even dismiss religious, secular, and spiritual identities as important on campus. This study sought to provide a snapshot of what can be done when a university takes these areas of identity seriously through efforts of institutional policies and practice.

A single site case study of this type provides only a limited view into the higher education ecosystem that currently exists within North America and of the ongoing efforts to provide inclusion for all forms of religious, secular, and spiritual identities. The study may have far reaching implications beyond higher education, into the public policy sector, and K-12 environments, as well as corporations and public industry. While much can be learned from the study, limitations existed. Further studies may illuminate a larger system of policies and practices that could influence significant change within society through organizational change. It is these limitations and implications that this chapter seeks to highlight.

Limitations and Research Implications

Lack of Sikh, Hindu and Atheist Voices

When the study was designed, there was hope that Hindu, Atheist, and Sikh students would be included as participants. Unfortunately, these individuals were difficult to track down and I was not able to identify participants for focus groups and interviews. There are numerous reasons for this. Among these reasons, include the potentially limited populations of the students

on campus from the identity groups to the potential failure of the campus climate in providing environments that support these identities and allow the students to feel safe to join together publicly in community. One other specific reason for this may be related to the use of space by Hindu and Sikh students. The study only focused on students who used the Pasquerilla Center, and if those students did not feel a need to use the center in the same ways as Muslims and Jewish students, the study would unintentionally have eliminated them from the pool of potential participants. Future studies should consider more critically an analysis of these identities and should seek to more adequately gain the perspectives of these populations. Without a broader understanding of the current situation of Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, Atheist, and other identities, inferences will continue to be made which fail to accurately provide understanding.

The study itself is limited because Buddhist, Hindu, and Sikh voices are absent from the study; this absence potentially reinforces the campus climate as being an experience of the Abrahamic (Muslim, Jewish and Christian) voices that exist on campus. With the demographics of campus changing so rapidly (Pew, 2014), further emphasis should be placed on other identities that have been missed in this study but are growing on campuses in important and potentially influential ways.

Future studies could uncover information that is currently missing from the literature and may help advance religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion efforts on campus.

Future studies may also consider multi-site inquiries in which identities such as Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, and other identities are more prominent in comparison to those campuses in which there are limited populations. In this way, a future study may identify how the differences in the demographic makeup of campuses may be a result of the differing institutional policies and practices present. Furthermore, these studies could reveal how students with religious

identities that are traditionally marginalized in North America are making decisions about enrolling at certain institutions as opposed to others and whether those decisions are based on certain institutional policies and practices.

Additionally, there is an opportunity for longitudinal studies to consider the changes to religious, secular, and spiritual identities over time in higher education. Such studies could consider how a population has changed demographically over time and how the influence of Sikhs, Hindus, and Atheists have influenced campus awareness and in turn policy and practice implications. These studies could be important in determining if specific or more visible populations (such as Sikhs with the standard wearing of the turban by Sikh men) may more directly influence campus policies and practices.

Lack of Institutional Data at Penn State

The lack of relative size and thus the inherent invisibility of religious, secular, and spiritual identities on campus is problematic, but also caused by the lack of data Penn State collects related to identities. Hindus, Sikhs, and Atheist communities, may experience struggles similar to their Jewish and Muslim peers, in convincing the broader Penn State institution to offer adequate accommodations. This includes the possibilities of more Kosher and Halal options in the dining centers, the prayer and meditation spaces that students discussed in the study, as well as potential academic calendar accommodations. Academic accommodations appeared at the time of the study to be a question mark as students headed into the coming school year in which Ramadan and final exams at Penn State were to coincide.

As universities think critically about how to engage these different identities, demographic information collection may be useful. The current study struggles to make sense of just how many students would potentially use the Pasquerilla Center or how the campus climate

is affected by the enrollment of students from different religious identities. Due to the lack of such data, this study lacks the robustness that comes from knowing just how much of the campus has been affected by the work of the CFSED and of the Pasquerilla Center itself.

Timing of the Study

The study was conducted in April and May of 2019, and as such, there were clear limitations in the amount of activities I was able to attend and the amount of activities that were happening in the Pasquerilla Center. In all, I attended twelve events during the observation period. Finding students from the Jewish tradition was relatively easy, mostly because Passover, one of the highest Jewish Holy Days, was taking place while I was visiting the center for my study. The Jewish students were visible and the community was welcoming and accommodating as I sought to include participants in the study.

The timing also was a challenging time for students due to finals occurring during this time. Most students I talked with were in the midst of preparing for finals or actively taking finals, which led to the need to host Zoom call focus groups and interviews with students after the semester was over. This limitation potentially limited the responses of students and was clearly a challenge in getting the students to interact with one another during the focus groups. These circumstances were difficult to control based on my own life circumstances, were a potential limitation of the study that could be mitigated in future studies.

The use of Zoom software also had its own limitations. Despite the efforts made, rapport with students is difficult to build in an online format. The study may be somewhat limited in that some responses by students could have been inhibited by their comfort in discussing with me certain aspects of their experience at Penn State. Overall, the completed study offers a basis on which more research should be built. A more in-depth case-study, allowing for more time and

more participants, would be helpful future research. The next section, to which I now turn, presents a set of considerations for how the study may inform higher education institutions in supporting the diverse needs of religious, secular, and spiritual identifying individuals.

Implications for Higher Education

Several significant implications exist that both higher education and industries beyond higher education could consider from the study of Penn State. Major findings during the study revealed possible opportunities for institutions to enhance campus climates. Table 5 outlines these as a part of Strange and Banning's (2001) theoretical framework of physical environment, constructed environments, organizational environments, and aggregate environments.

Table 5		
<i>Major Findings of the Students and Their Potential Implications for Higher Education</i>		
Tenets of Framework	Major Findings	Implications for Higher education
Physical Environments	Muslim, Jewish and Christian students are welcome	Physical space creation
	Interactions but not intersections	
Aggregate Environments	The differing experiences lead toward differing experiences of the campus climate	Campus-wide demographics

Table 5. (continued)		
Organizational Environments	The CRSED fosters intersections	Creation of offices and staff
		Academic Accommodations (<i>also fits in aggregate environments</i>)
Constructed Environments	The climate is determined based on holistic inclusion	Dietary Options offered on campus
		Policies around Proselytization

Higher education's increased focus since the 1998 Education as Transformation Conference (Schmalzbauer, 2019) has not yet produced comprehensive results. Even with Penn State's dedication through the creation of physical environments and a Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development, there remains much at Penn State that can be improved upon. This study, though, has offered a number of considerations for higher education that should be taken seriously. If institutions were to better support religious, secular, and spiritual identities, the possible impacts could be an increase in enrollment of international students as well as increased retention and student satisfaction (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011). The following section is divided loosely into three areas: practices, policies, and overall climate assessment. The recommendations seek to utilize the data from the study to provide meaningful solutions for institutions of higher education.

Practice Creation

If policies are the hallmark of institutional efforts to demonstrate a university's commitment to inclusion, then practices are what show its integrity. This study revealed several

significant practices that universities should consider in addressing the needs of religious, secular, and spiritual identities on campus. Many of these practices are generally effective, but could still use improvement. These practices illustrate the complexity and also the opportunity for higher education when it takes seriously religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

Creation of Offices and Staff (Organizational Environment Implication)

Throughout the study, there appeared to be no greater indicator of the commitment to religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion than through the presence of the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development (CFSED) and its staff. It can be argued that the Pasquerilla Center as a physical space was more influential than the CFSED, as it drew students together as well as provided a safe space in which religious practice could occur. but without the center's the intersections of religious, secular, and spiritual identities would largely have been absent. The challenge is that the cost of creating an office to oversee the inclusion of these identities has been an afterthought at many universities (Nielsen & Small, 2019).

In considering religious, secular, and spiritual identities, institutions of higher education may consider Penn State as a model for why and how a multifaith center can be created. The CFSED advocates for the students, rather than students being forced to advocate on their own behalf with professors. Having a staff advocate provides credibility to students when they are forced time and time again to appeal to faculty for accommodations that are routinely at the discretion of those in charge of the classroom.

Secondly, the CFSED staff organically build relationships with students through visibility and intentionality, which is integral to students knowing where to turn for support for their religious, secular, and spiritual identities. While important in a number of ways, institutions should not overlook how visible and dedicated staff can help solve institutional concerns simply

by their presence and dedicated efforts. This also involves an understanding that the staff involved in overseeing religious life on campus may themselves be able to affect the campus climate through carefully thought out policies and practices for which they can help advocate. One of those practices that campuses should consider is the dietary options of students.

Dietary Options Around Campus (Constructed Environment Implication)

Policies providing Kosher and Halal options are some of the most important things a university can offer to support Jewish and Muslim community members on campus. Yet, there was a limited presence of Kosher and Halal options at Penn State. This study identified this as a reason certain students were not as satisfied with their experience of the campus. The lack of attention to these dietary options may also be a reason Hindu, Jain, and Sikh students are not engaging the center in the same ways as Muslims and Jews. Just because an institution of higher education erects a building that includes a Kosher kitchen does not necessarily mean that those inclusive practices will be effectively implemented campus-wide. At Penn State, the Kosher kitchen is run by Hillel and the staff of the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development, thus the university is relatively hands-off regarding the provision of Kosher options.

The university might find that providing Kosher and Halal options is a way to increase recruitment of students from these two communities. Many of the students attested to their interest in seeing more options on campus. There is a chance, then, that during recruitment visits, students from these identities take notice of the lack of options on campus and choose to attend another university which may have a more robust set of inclusive food options. Kosher and Halal are becoming more prominent in higher education in recent years (Nielsen & Small, 2019; Schmalzbauer, 2019) but there were still many universities without these options at the time this study was completed.

The Need for Campus-Wide Measurement of Demographics (Aggregated Environment Implication)

Even at Penn State University, the populations of each religious, secular, and spiritual tradition is unknown. It is possible to assume general size from the presence within the Pasquerilla Center of the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian populations, but estimates often do not hold up well in institutional research. Penn State's lack of data on the populations of religious, secular, and spiritual students is relatively standard among higher education institutions. Many have simply abandoned consideration of the demographic in surveys and analyses of student populations (Small, 2015).

There are several consequences that play out when a campus fails to measure the religious, secular, and spiritual identities of its students. In general, a lack of data leaves few ways to understand the current needs of the students. As a result institutional policies and practices that support these students may be slow to change. Additionally, lack of data is an abdication of responsibility by the institution in addressing needs of religious, secular, and spiritual identities. Refusing to see this area of diversity as important is reinforcing the gap in data collection and thus becomes a cyclical concern.

At the very least, universities should consider measuring more accurately the demographics of the campus religious, secular, and spiritual communities. Previous studies have spoken to the institutional outcomes of retention, graduation rates, and student satisfaction and wellbeing as well as their relation to student spiritual and non-religious community practice (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011; Bowman & Small, 2015; Rockenbach, Mayhew, 2013). In higher education, institutional outcomes are the principle reasons why administrators invest

resources to provide for accommodations of any sort. Religious, secular, and spiritual identities are being systematically left out because little data exists to rationalize their needs.

With enrollment numbers on the decline nationwide (Princeton Review, n.d.) and with the need to offset gaps in budgets, universities should consider more carefully how international student recruitment requires consideration of religious, secular, and spiritual identities. Failure to address such areas of identity could potentially harm the recruitment efforts of international students. Additionally, this failure could lead to potential legal challenges if universities start being sued over accommodations that are in many ways upheld by First and Fourteenth Amendment standards. Understanding these demographics and measuring them over time opens up the possibility of how best to invest in the needs of religious, secular, and spiritual students. Overall, the practices that Penn State has created and implemented are helpful, but there still remains opportunities to consider why they are not doing more to further satisfy the needs of other religious, secular, and spiritual communities.

Policy Creation

Academic accommodations (Aggregate and Organizational Environment

Implication)

One of the key institutional policies found in this study is the need to have better academic accommodations on campus. While the First Amendment of the United States Constitution requires publicly funded universities to consider religious freedom of practice, many universities often fail to thoroughly address the concerns of students. Penn State's commitment to provide a center and the staff who can support students on a day-to-day basis and

advocate for their needs wields possibilities for other institutions. But the lack of an academic accommodations policy at Penn State still needs to be addressed.

Institutions of higher education should seek to provide environments in which religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion is a visible part of the campus experience for all members of the community. As part of that effort, institutions should consider advancing policies that provide a standard practice related to religious holidays. This standard should include working with religious communities in determining which holidays need be placed on academic calendars to increase awareness for all members of the campus community in addition to publicizing institutional policies for accommodation. Furthermore, institutions may do well to consider policies for staff and other campus professionals as well, providing opportunities for floating religious holidays and better policies which allow for all members of the campus community to practice their religious, secular, and spiritual identities.

Policies around Proselytization on campus (Constructed Environment Implication)

Over the past several years, Penn State has adapted and changed its campus-wide free speech policies to meet the needs of its campus community. In an era in which free speech is one of the key topics in higher education, consideration of religious, secular, and spiritual identities could be of significance to the campus. This study found that students and staff alike continue to witness many incidents of proselytization around campus. In the case of the Pasquerilla Center, no proselytization is allowed, which is potentially contributing to the sense of welcome identified by many students from non-Christian identities in the interviews and focus groups.

Universities have an obligation to provide a safe venue for their students to experience campus life. A lack of inclusive policies or engagement in a larger understanding of the religious, secular, and spiritual challenges that exist on campus could be seen by many as a

dereliction of duty within the bounds of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Universities should consider how policies around proselytizing can be helpful in promoting an inclusive campus climate for all students, even those who are more conservative theologically.

Physical Space Creation (Physical Environments Implication)

The Pasquerilla Center at Penn State may be a unique and somewhat token physical space within the higher education world, but in the interviews with the Director it is clear that more and more universities are beginning to consider their options. Yet, despite all the phone calls Bob Smith, the Director of the CFSED has received over the years, “there are very few universities who have actually created spaces, instead citing other needs or simply a lack of willingness to jump through the potential legal challenges” (Participant SAM).

Physical space in the study was shown to provide the venue necessary to help build interactions of students across religious identities, at least amongst the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian communities.

Universities responding to the needs of religious identities have an opportunity to foster their campus climates through investment in buildings that serve as vessels of inclusion for all forms of identities, including Sikhs and Hindus who were largely absent in the study of Penn State.

In the case that a university begins creating a new space, it should consider providing prayer and meditation spaces that may be more inclusive than the “Muslim prayer room” at the Pasquerilla Center which may provide a greater sense of inclusion. Additionally, providing spaces specifically dedicated to South Asian traditions may help in promoting greater inclusively and understanding on campus, as well as a campus climates overall that elevate these identities. These opportunities, created by providing physical space, are only the first step. The practices

outlined above, specifically the creation of an office and staff, serve an important purpose which may have been overlooked in higher education, especially among public institutions.

Research Implications

Throughout this study, several potential research opportunities emerged that could inform the work of future studies. Future research could be helpful in expanding the current knowledge related to religious, secular, and spiritual identities and the campus climates of higher education. While Penn State served as an effective case for inquiry, the current study lacks several important areas of data which are necessary to create a more comprehensive picture of higher education's efforts for RSSI inclusion. These limitations include the need for multi-site studies, comparable multifaith space studies, as well as longitudinal studies of policy implementation, including that of Kosher and Halal dietary options.

In the first of these, there is an opportunity for future research to use of a multi-site case study analysis. A study like this would provide opportunities to look at a multitude of factors in campus climate efforts, including how the religious demographic breakdown of universities may affect the policies and practices that are implemented at each institution. This type of study could also offer opportunities to consider how the aggregation of religious communities affects the results. For instance, could the experience of Orthodox and Reform Jews differ at institutions? Furthermore, there are opportunities to study how specific policies may affect the campus climate at different institutions.

A second set of research opportunities exist when considering the differing forms of multifaith spaces on campus. In these studies, analyses of the locations, makeup, and designation of spaces and how they may affect the campus experience for students could be considered. Certain institutions may create neutral meditation spaces while others create Muslim prayer

spaces. Additionally, universities may create multiple spaces or single spaces. Finally, these studies could consider how policies related to scheduling of these spaces may affect the usage and experiences of students who seek to use them.

A final set of studies could consider a longitudinal approach in which a pre and post analysis may be conducted related to an institution and its policies. For example, a university might be studied over a period of two to three years during which it implemented Kosher and Halal options in its dining centers. This type of study would offer opportunities to consider the impact of certain policies upon the student experience. Alongside these research implications, there is at least one theoretical implication that should be considered.

Theoretical Implication

Throughout the study, Strange and Banning (2001) formed the principle framework for inquiry using their lens, the *Educating by Design* model of campus climate. By incorporating physical environments, constructed environments, aggregate environments, and organizational environments, a picture of a campus climate can emerge that highlights the deeply intertwined methods a campus such as Penn State takes to promote areas of diversity and inclusion. Yet, the study presented a challenge that for religious, secular, and spiritual identities, the framework's tenets lack the ability to provide proscriptive analysis. In other words, while the framework is helpful in giving a general overview of the campus climate, the ability to adapt the campus climate is limited. In response, there may be a need to consider a new framework.

There is opportunity for a future grounded theory study in which an adaptation of the theoretical framework might be created. The adapted framework would be one that is more directed toward religious, secular, and spiritual identities and provides the opportunity for a detailed analysis of the ways in which the campus climate might be better adapted to meet the

needs of students. Additionally, the future theory could seek to overcome the Christian hegemony issues that often plague universities in their attempts at equity or neutrality in the realm of religious, secular, and spiritual identities. A new theory would offer solutions, not just analysis.

Final Thoughts

To study Penn State's Pasquerilla Center and the Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development has been one of the greatest joys of my professional career. Nearly seven years after I first stepped foot in the center, the work of this study has offered significant contributions to the field in which I now wish to spend my career. While new and at times confusing for administrators, religious, secular, and spiritual identities are perhaps the last and broadest area of diversity which now must be considered as a part of institutional climate efforts. This study has its limitations, as do all studies, but in the end, solutions can be found within the study for supporting religious, secular, and spiritual identities. My hope is that this study offers a path for more researchers, practioners, and administrators alike who believe deeply in the importance of this area of diversity. In the end, I am reminded of the words of Victor Hugo, widely esteemed as one of the greatest French poets in living memory: *All the armies of the world can not stop an idea whose time has come*. For religious, secular, and spiritual identities work in higher education and beyond, that time is now.

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APPENDIX A. DOCUMENT REVIEW PROTOCOLWhat Type of Document?

- Letter
- Email
- Report
- Chart
- Architectural Plans
- Press Release
- Newspaper
- Speech
- Other (please identify) _____

Core Elements:

Who Wrote?

Who read received?

When is it from?

Where is it from?

Analysis:

What is being discussed?

Who is the audience?

One sentence summarization of document.

What else was happening at the same time as this was written?

Why did this get written?

Rationale from the document – how you know “why this was written.”

Further Analysis

What is unique about this document?

What else should be considered after analysis of this document?

Element	Reflective Notes

APPENDIX C. RECRUITMENT EMAIL TO STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION

Dear {insert name},

{Insert personalized greeting and indicate if/how we have been connected, e.g. through a mutual campus colleague.}

I am coordinating a visit to your campus on [insert dates] to conduct my dissertation research, which focuses on understanding the physical spaces and the institutional policies and practices which affect campus climate at Penn State in supporting religious, secular, and spiritual identities..

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. A decision to participate (or not) will have no bearing on your employment activities or status, nor will others on campus be informed of your involvement as a participant. If you are willing to assist, either by recommending students or taking part in an interview, please let me know by responding to this email. Once I hear from you, I will follow up with more details about next steps.

Should you choose to participate in the study, or to help with student identification, the following would be requested.

- **Email students who would be eligible and interested in participating.** I plan to conduct interviews with students who are from Catholic, Protestant, and Evangelical Christian identities, as well as Jewish, Muslim, and nonreligious identities. Students will be screened for active engagement in religious, secular, or spiritual communities as well as with the Pasquerilla Center. If you are willing to email students who meet these criteria and invite them to participate in this research, I will provide details about the study to include in your message (e.g., study overview, what is required of participants, etc.).
- **Take part in an interview as a study participant.** I would value your insights about the students and campus environment at Penn State, and if you are willing to do so, I ask that you participate in a 60-90 minute interview while I am on campus, at a time and location of your choosing.

Thank you for your support of this project! I look forward to talking with you soon should you choose to participate

J. Cody Nielsen, Doctoral Candidate
Educational Leadership and Higher Education
Iowa State University

APPENDIX D. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION

1. Let's begin by sharing a bit about ourselves with one another. *I will begin by sharing a few details about my personal background and research interests* [possible prompts]
 - a. How long have you been at Penn State University
 - b. How are you involved in religious, secular, and spiritual identities work on campus?
 - c. How is your role tied to the Pasquerilla Center?
2. As you know, the study is exploring the campus climate through physical spaces of the Pasquerilla Center as well as the institutional policies and practices that are created and enforced through the Office for Spiritual and Ethical Development. Therefore, I'd like to spend some time talking with you about your work with these spaces and this center on campus.
 - a. Tell me about your experience with the Pasquerilla Center?
 - b. How do you see your work related to religious, secular, and spiritual identities?
 - c. Are there institutional policies and practices that you have seen applied to support these identities on campus?
 - d. By whom do you see the physical spaces of the Pasquerilla Center being used?
 - e. Describe the kinds of activities you see taking place within the Pasquerilla Center.
 - f. Who else on campus would you consider to be an expert in this area of work that should be included in the study?
3. These are all the questions I have at this time.
 - a. Based on our conversations today, do you have any questions for me?
 - b. Do you have additional thoughts or comments related to what we discussed?
 - c. Are there other questions you wish I had asked? If so, please describe.

APPENDIX E. RECRUITMENT EMAIL TO STUDENTS

Dear {insert name},

{Insert personalized greeting and indicate if/how we have been connected, e.g. through a mutual campus colleague.}

I am conducting a study for my dissertation research which focuses on understanding the physical spaces and the institutional policies and practices which affect campus climate at Penn State in supporting religious, secular, and spiritual identities. I am inviting you to take part in this study.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. A decision to participate (or not) will have no bearing on your academic or other status as a student. If you are willing to assist, which would include participating in a focus group and potentially a one on one interview which will take place using Zoom software, please let me know by responding to this email. Once I hear from you, I will follow up with more details about next steps.

Should you choose to participate in the study, a follow up screening will be provided with further information.

Thank you for your support of this project! I look forward to talking with you soon should you choose to participate.

J. Cody Nielsen, Doctoral Candidate
Educational Leadership and Higher Education
Iowa State University

APPENDIX F. STUDENT SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for your interest in the study of institutional climate for religious, secular, and spiritual identities at Penn State University. As you may know, this research is being conducted by a doctoral candidate at Iowa State University in order to learn more about the collegiate experiences of students on your campus who (a) hold differing religious, spiritual, and nonreligious beliefs, and (b) participate in utilizing the physical spaces of the Pasquerilla Center and (c) participate in your own community. Participation in the study includes taking part in one (1) 60-90 minute focus group interview with 5-7 other students from your university. If chosen, you will be offered the opportunity to participate in one (1) 60 minute individual interview. The following questionnaire will be used to determine your eligibility for this study. If you are selected to participate, you will be notified via email with further information. Thank you for responding to the questions below. You will be notified about your status as a study participant by [DEADLINE].

First Name:

Last Name:

Email Address:

Regarding your current religious or nonreligious perspective, with which of the following descriptors do you most closely identify?

- ☐ ☐ Agnosticism
- ☐ ☐ Atheism
- ☐ ☐ Baha'i Faith
- ☐ ☐ Buddhism
- ☐ ☐ Christianity, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormonism)
- ☐ ☐ Christianity, Protestant
- ☐ ☐ Christianity, Orthodox
- ☐ ☐ Christianity, Roman Catholic
- ☐ ☐ Confucianism
- ☐ ☐ Daoism
- ☐ ☐ Hinduism
- ☐ ☐ Islam
- ☐ ☐ Jainism
- ☐ ☐ Judaism
- ☐ ☐ Native American Tradition(s)
- ☐ ☐ Nonreligious
- ☐ ☐ None
- ☐ ☐ Paganism
- ☐ ☐ Secular Humanism
- ☐ ☐ Sikhism
- ☐ ☐ Spiritual
- ☐ ☐ Unitarian Universalism
- ☐ ☐ Zoroastrianism

- ☐ ☐ Another worldview; please specify: _____
- ☐ ☐ I prefer not to respond

Are you currently involved in a community related to your religious, secular, and spiritual identity:

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

How often would you say that you attend the Pasquerilla Center, either for a programming event or simply for use of physical spaces within the center:

- ☐ 0 times this year
- ☐ 1-2 times this year
- ☐ 1-2 times this month
- ☐ 1-2 times a week
- ☐ Nearly Every Day

APPENDIX G. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

1. Let's begin by sharing a bit about ourselves with one another. Could you describe a little bit about yourself and your experience of choosing Penn State?
2. As you know, this study is exploring the experiences of students with different religious, secular, and spiritual identities who participate in communities related to those identities and are active in using the Pasquerilla Center. Therefore, I would like to spend some time talking about your beliefs.
 - a. How would you describe your religious, secular, and spiritual outlook on life? (I will also refer to this as your *worldview*.)
 - b. Tell me about your experiences on this campus given the worldview to which you ascribe. [Possible prompts:]
 - a. Which spaces on campus do you most use when it comes to religious, secular, and spiritual programming?
 - b. Are there ways in which the university has for you demonstrated a commitment to support your identity?
 - c. Do you feel part of the campus community at Penn State? Please talk more about the campus community with respect to your worldview.
 - d. Are there special concerns for your communities that you think are important to discuss?
3. These are all the questions I have at this time.
 - a. Based on our conversation today, do you have any questions for me?
 - b. Do you have additional thoughts or comments related to what we discussed?
 - c. Are there other questions you wish I had asked? If so, please describe.

APPENDIX H. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR STUDENT FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

1. I will begin by revisiting prior conversations with the interviewee [possible directions]
 - a. Discuss additional thoughts student has had since participating in the focus group interview
 - b. Allowing for elaboration on anything the student previously shared during the focus group interview
 - c. Clarifying points from previous focus group interview

2. I will continue to explore student's perspective on campus climate [possible directions]
 - a. Salience of worldview in connection to campus climate
 - b. Connection between student's worldview and use of the physical spaces on campus
 - c. Connection between student's worldview and engagement in programming
 - d. Do you feel that the campus is welcoming to all forms of identity you may personally bring with you to Penn State?
 - e. Are there other identities you bring that are more or less welcomed than those of your religious, secular, and spiritual identity?
 - f. Tell me about your interactions with students who have different worldviews than your own.

3. I will attempt to ascertain interviewee's perceptions of the campus administration's support for religious, secular, and spiritual identity?
 - a. How have you experienced the campus staff and administration in terms of your worldview?
 - b. Do you know of specific instances in which you have felt like you belong on campus as you bring your religious, secular, and spiritual identity?
 - c. Do you know of circumstances in which peers may have felt welcomed or discouraged from bringing their religious, secular, and spiritual identity?
 - d. Can you discuss where you would go to discuss needs around your religious, secular, and spiritual identity?

APPENDIX I. IRB APPROVAL FORM



Institutional Review Board
 Office for Responsible Research
 Vice President for Research
 2420 Lincoln Way, Suite 202
 Ames, Iowa 50014
 515 294-4566

Date: 07/01/2019

To: J Cody Nielsen Erin Doran

From: Office for Responsible Research

Title: The Religious, Secular, and Spiritual Climate of Higher Education: Exploring Penn State's Pasquerilla Center through Case Study

IRB ID: 19-161

Submission Type: Modification **Exemption Date:** 07/01/2019

The project referenced above has been declared exempt from most requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.104 or 21 CFR 56.104 because it meets the following federal requirements for exemption:

2018 - 2 (ii): Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) when any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation.

The determination of exemption means that:

- **You do not need to submit an application for continuing review. Instead, you will receive a request for a brief status update every three years. The status update is intended to verify that the study is still ongoing.**
- **You must carry out the research as described in the IRB application.** Review by IRB staff is required prior to implementing modifications that may change the exempt status of the research. In general, review is required for any *modifications to the research procedures* (e.g., method of data collection, nature or scope of information to be collected, nature or duration of behavioral interventions, use of deception, etc.), any change in *privacy or confidentiality protections*, modifications that result in the *inclusion of participants from vulnerable populations*, removing plans for informing participants about the study, any *change that may increase the risk or discomfort to participants*, and/or any change such that the revised procedures do not fall into one or more of the [regulatory exemption categories](#). The purpose of review is to determine if the project still meets the federal criteria for exemption.

APPENDIX J. OBSERVATION PROTOCOL QUESTIONS

1. How does the physical environment of the Pasquerilla Multifaith Center show support for religious, secular, and spiritual diversity of the campus environment?
 - a. What does it look like?
 - b. What is the configuration?
 - c. What activities are taking place?
2. Description of the actors within the setting.
 - a. Who is present?
 - b. What are they doing?
 - c. Where are they positioned?
 - d. Who are the “insiders” and “outsiders”?
 - e. What are the distinct and/or common characteristics of actors?
 - f. What is unique/notable about the specific actor(s) I am observing?
3. What are the experiences of those within the space of the Pasquerilla Multifaith Center?
 - a. What is being conveyed verbally?
 - b. Who is talking to whom?
 - c. What nonverbal cues are being given?
4. Description of cultural dimensions.
 - a. What are the repetitive refrains?
 - b. What are the resonant metaphors?
 - c. What are the unspoken values and norms?
 - d. What are the salient rituals and artifacts?

APPENDIX K. INFORMED CONSENT FOR STUDENTS

This consent information is valid {insert validated dates} at Penn State University

INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH – Student

Title of Study:

Principal Investigator: J. Cody Nielsen **Faculty Sponsor:** Dr. Erin Doran

The purpose of a research study is to gain a better understanding of a certain topic or issue. Research studies may pose risks to those that participate, and you are not guaranteed any personal benefits for participating in a study. In this consent form you will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form, it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher(s) named above.

Please review the details of this study, outlined below, before you decide to participate.

Thank you for your interest in the study of institutional religious identity and worldview diversity at Penn State University. As you may know, I am a doctoral candidate at Iowa State University and I am conducting my dissertation research study at Penn State.

You are being asked to participate in this research study. *While participating in this study you may experience the following risks or discomforts: potential social and psychological discomfort from answering sensitive questions during a focus group or interview. In addition, there is a minimal but possible risk disclosure of information.* You may make a decision to participate or not, without affecting your status at school. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in at least one of the following:

- One (1) 60-90 minute focus group interview with the researcher and 5-7 other students from similar religious, secular, or spiritual identities from your university. The focus group will be held either in person in a secure location or using Zoom software in an online based format that is password protected.
- Up to (1) one-on-one interviews with the researcher. Each of these interviews will around 60 minutes in length, and will take place in a secure, on-campus location or via the use of Zoom software which is password protected.

You may also be asked to review study information or transcripts via email to verify accuracy.

Any interviews in which you participate will be audio-recorded and transcribed for later use by the researcher. To protect your identity, you will be assigned a pseudonym at the time of your first interview. You may also choose not to answer questions you are asked during the interviews. Finally, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Information in the study will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer or in a Google Drive folder within Iowa State University's Google archives, and printed data will be stored in a locked office at Penn State University. Audio recordings of interviews will be destroyed after completion of the study, and no personal identifiers will be used in published findings.

Your participation in this study will provide an opportunity for self-reflection about your own experience at Penn State University. Additionally, it will facilitate understanding about the experiences of students from diverse religious, spiritual, and nonreligious perspectives on your campus. The insights gained from this study may have useful implications for scholars and practitioners at your university and/or in the field of higher education.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, J. Cody Nielsen, at jnielsen@iastate.edu or (319) 759-9688. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or if your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact {insert IRB representative}.

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this consent form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose to withdraw my participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I also certify that I am 18 years of age or over and agree to participate in the study.

Subject's signature _____ Date _____
Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

You may print a copy of this form for your files.

APPENDIX L. INFORMED CONSENT FOR STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION

This consent information is valid {insert validated dates} at Penn State University

INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH – Staff

Title of Study:

Principal Investigator: J. Cody Nielsen **Faculty Sponsor:** Dr. Erin Doran

The purpose of a research study is to gain a better understanding of a certain topic or issue. Research studies may pose risks to those that participate, and you are not guaranteed any personal benefits for participating in a study. In this consent form you will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form, it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher(s) named above.

Please review the details of this study, outlined below, before you decide to participate.

Thank you for your interest in the study of institutional religious identity and worldview diversity at Penn State University. As you may know, I am a doctoral candidate at Iowa State University and I am conducting my dissertation research study at Penn State.

You are being asked to participate in this research study. *While participating in this study you may experience the following risks or discomforts: potential social and psychological discomfort from answering sensitive questions during a focus group or interview. In addition, there is a minimal but possible risk of disclosure of information.* You may make a decision to participate or not, without affecting your status at school. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in at least one of the following:

- One (1) one-on-one interviews with the researcher. Each of these interviews will be between 60-90 minutes in length, and will take place in a secure, on-campus location of your choosing.

You may also be asked to review study information or transcripts via email to verify accuracy.

Any interviews in which you participate will be audio-recorded and transcribed for later use by the researcher. To protect your identity, you will be assigned a pseudonym at the time of your first interview. You may also choose not to answer questions you are asked during the interviews. Finally, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Information in the study records will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer or in a Google Drive folder within Iowa State University's google archives, and printed data will be stored in a locked office at Penn State University. Audio recordings of interviews will be destroyed after completion of the study, and no personal identifiers will be used in published findings.

Your participation in this study will provide an opportunity for self-reflection about your own experience at Penn State University. Additionally, it will facilitate understanding about the experiences of students from diverse religious, spiritual, and nonreligious perspectives on your campus. The insights gained from this study may have useful implications for scholars and practitioners at your university and/or in the field of higher education.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, J. Cody Nielsen, at jnielsen@iastate.edu or (319) 759-9688. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or if your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact {insert IRB representative}.

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this consent form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose to withdraw my participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled.

Subject's signature _____ Date _____
Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

TIMELINE OF DATA COLLECTION

	Document Review	Focus Groups	One on One Interviews Students	One on One Interviews with Staff and Administration	Observation
PRESCREENING (Prior to Visit) 2-3 Weeks				Determine individuals to interview	
Week 1	Extensive Document review informed by observation	Begin Identifying Student Participants		Interviews with Multifaith Center Staff	Extensive Observation of spaces
Week 2	Extensive Document Review informed by interviews			Interviews with other Administrative Staff	Extensive Observation of spaces
Week 3	Continued Document Review	Focus Group Interviews	Identify one to one participants based on focus groups		Observation of spaces
Week 4	Document Review		Follow up interviews		Final observations
Week 5			Follow up interviews		
Post Visit (2-3 Weeks)		Member Checking	Member Checking	Member Checking	